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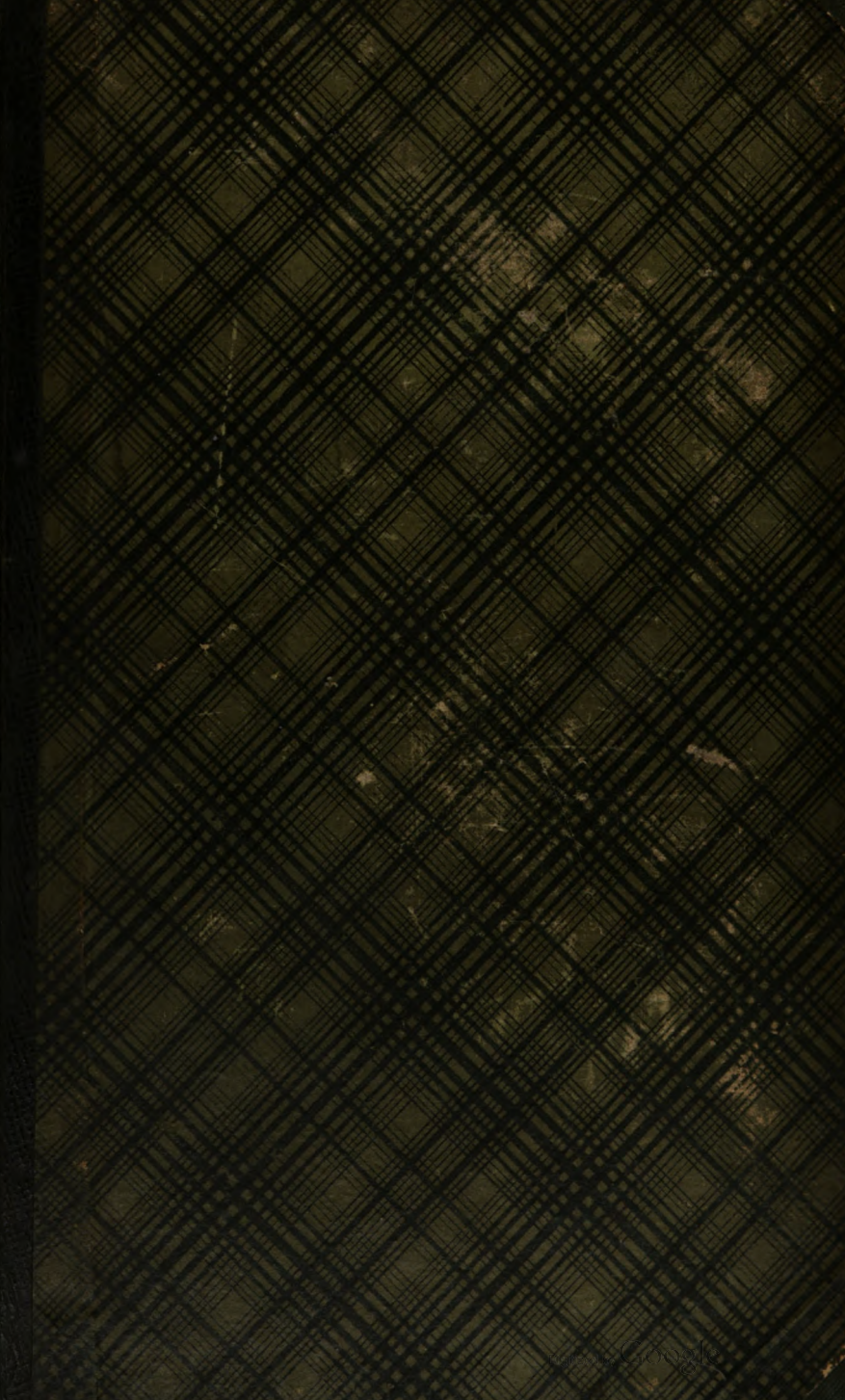
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# SIXTY YEARS HENCE.

A NOVEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WHITE SLAVE,"

&c. &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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By Charles Frederick Henningsen "

# SIXTY YEARS HENCE.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE LADY CALLIROE.

It is early in the month of December, of the year of our Lord ONE THOUSAND, NINE HUNDRED AND SIX.

In the uppermost chamber of the loftiest tower of a baronial castle, the Lady Calliroë reclines upon the silken cushions of her ottoman. The apartment overlooks the sea upon



one side, and through the opposite casement displays an extensive land view. A vast park occupies the foreground, studded with old trees, whose scanty foliage, reduced to a few leaves which linger, sear and withered, on the boughs, discovers a distant view of copse and covert, hill and dale, white farms, green fields, and village spires.

The sun shines brightly—though the air is dry and chill, and the soil still wet with recent rain. The sea, which is open and unbayed, extends its placid surface in glassy smoothness, shewing its pulsations only by the occasional gleam of some light-refracting ripple in the distance.

The land presents the same aspect of repose as the water; and the very deer, who give life to the landscape, having browsed their fill, sun themselves listlessly in the dry fern, whose rich hues harmonise so well with the mossy trunks of the venerable oaks.

This scene is English.

Where is there any other land, than England, home of the oak, which can exhibit that full and massive arboreal structure—rivalised only by the chesnut-tree—not of nature, but of Claude Lorraine?

England, where the majestic oak and the lowly underwood look more complete and shapely, when stripped of all their leaves, than the woods of more highly vaunted climes in their full foliage—where this luxuriancy of vegetation is not the partial result of an intolerable sun, which, favouring one form of vegetable life, scorches up others from the arid soil—but, on the contrary, allied to eternal freshness. There is only England where the meadow relieves with its deep green, the woodlands, and the trees, when the wintry mist lingers about their base in hues of blue or purple, whilst the dense boughs and sapless leaves of their summits are bathed in sunlight.

It is one of the few days of her mild winter,

when the winds are hushed and the sky—whose habitual humidity generates this freshness—blue and clear, so that the landscape seems glowing in the beams of a bright spring day, if seen without feeling that chilliness precursive, probably of coming frost.

And so it is seen from the apartment of the Lady Calliroë, through the crystalline purity of the plate-glass, which, filling alike the open window spaces and the fretted stone-work of the gallery surrounding her apartment, shuts out the bleak air and incloses not a spring temperature only, but a tropical climate.

A tropical climate, with all its products, most costly, rare and fragrant, cooled down to pleasantness by artificial draughts which envelop the dweller in its atmosphere, whose weight—moving, standing, or reclining—whether on the gorgeous cushions, or on the floor tiles—carpet-covered, or glittering in mosaic brilliancy—disengages, by its pressure,

currents of air alternately charged with varying perfumes or in all the purity of the mountain breeze.

If we were to open a little volume amongst the gold-clasped tomes which lie upon that ivory cheffoniere, we should find that it treats  
“ of an art unknown to our forefathers—even  
“ half a century back—though, by its means,  
“ not only gratifications are secured, which they  
“ can never have tasted, but even health and  
“ life prolonged. Not but that some inkling  
“ of the existence of these arts had dawned  
“ upon them, though being ignorant of the harmonies of fragrance—of inspiration and of  
“ aspiration—their rude attempts were hurtful  
“ or discordant, as the use of artificial sounds  
“ by the first savage who bellowed  
“ through a wild bull’s horn—sounds which we  
“ blend and mingle now into such soul-en-  
“ trancing melodies.

“ Where, not quite ignorantly or rudely, they  
“ were mischievously used, as in the memora-

“ble instance of that Doctor Reid, whose  
“effigy in our children’s bonfires has sup-  
“planted that of the traditionary and once  
“popular Guy Fox. To expiate the attempt  
“made by this personage, to destroy by gun-  
“powder the Parliament of Great Britain, and  
“which attributed to the instigation of the  
“Jesuits, if not wholly fictitious, was as-  
“suredly never put into execution, he was  
“strangely enough held up to obloquy by  
“the very generation destined (in 1848) to  
“witness not the attempted, but the actual  
“destruction of a British House of Commons,  
“by the malignant Doctor, who, after tortur-  
“ing that legislative body, for several years,  
“eventually extinguished it (obviously, at the  
“vengeful suggestion of the baffled pro-  
“tectionist party,) as we see cruel children  
“suffocate mice in an exhausted air-receiver.”

“Dr. Reid” continues the note at the bottom of the page,

“Being arraigned and convicted in the autumn  
‘of the same year, was sentenced to solitary

"confinement for the term of his natural life ; being the first criminal condemned after the final abolition of the punishment of death.

"Nevertheless, a special act was passed by the new Parliament to meet so unparalleled a crime by some peculiar infliction, and it was provided, as a proportionate aggravation of punishment, that his confinement should take place in a building ventilated on his own principle."

Thanks to this art, in that chamber, whose pilasters are wreathed with exotic fruits and flowers—its fair occupant reclines inhaling and surrounded by, an atmosphere so temperate that the many hued humming birds fluttering about this bower, quit frequently the congenial vegetation of their native clime to hover round her, and that the gazelle crouches at her side ; all, as if enamoured of her fair person, with proximity, to which they have learned to connect the refreshing coolness which they once sought in the shade of their tropical woods, and now find by approaching her.

The Lady Calliroë is an inmate meet of such a bower.

Young, precocious, and fragile, she is as much an exotic as those plants and animals surrounding her, which would wither or perish in the northern air of the climate they are dwelling in.

Like the rare flowers, which half the world has been ransacked to bring together, her beauty if not positively greater, is of a kind more striking, because more unusual than the loveliness of our own land.

Not that its character is southern — on the contrary — her aspect rather denotes a northern origin.

Her hair is what is termed dark in the north and in the south of Europe fair — her complexion what both agree to be so.

She has eyes of that rare hue termed blue conventionally, but which are really of a deep violet, such as we see without its varying tints in the pansy, without its transparency in the changing plumage of the bright birds flitting round her.

Though her complexion is almost Teutonic in

its fairness, the least emotion of an exquisitely sensitive nervous organization, renders the arteries visible through her transparent skin, and throwing into some of her features a subdued half tint of purple gives them more than the character and expression of oriental beauty.

In temper and in years—a child; in passion and in form—a woman:—no Hindoo maiden on the Ganges' banks has grown to earlier maturity. If not robust, at least no sickly rapidity of growth has marred the perfection of her figure; and if her fragile charms are destined to fade early, they blend just now childhood's spring freshness with the impassioned loveliness of woman's summer.

At a first glance one might be tempted to compare the Lady Calliroë to a tender plant of the temperate zone whose seed some wind had wafted—some bird carried—to a torrid clime where, sheltered by the shade of a protective palm, whilst losing nothing of its freshness, it had derived from the inclement sun rapidity



of growth, vividity of perfume, and peculiarity of hue.

But this comparison would be inapt, for she resembles rather some of those foreign flowers which curious botanists (who value more a new variety of the nettle than the sweetest rose) bring into our hot-houses from over sea.

Here, in a factitious soil and artificial atmosphere, the humble flower which bloomed in native insignificance, gathers, through culture, gorgeous coloring, or surpassing fragrance, queening it over the fairest produce of our fields in which, untended by man's care, its actual vitality would be withered up. So the very life of the Lady Calliroë is artificial. She owes to human ingenuity and science that she breathes, and lives, and blooms.

An organic malady without such aid would long since have rendered fatal alike the hot blast of the south or the keen air of her native land. If she had been a poor man's child, or if she had been born half a century back, those delicately

rounded limbs might lie fleshless in their mouldering shroud ; that fair brow which emulates the purity and softness of the marble might glare in the ghastly whiteness of the coffined skull ; and the worms crawl slowly through those apertures whence now the soul radiates from her beaming eyes in looks of liquid love.

The Lady Calliroë is the only daughter of a senator and magnate of the united monarchies, a merchant prince, like all his class. His mines, lands, fisheries, factories, and banks were once scattered over both hemispheres ; but he has now concentrated them into lands, villages, and manufactories, for the purpose of acquiring political influence. He has long been, and is still, one of the most powerful members of the most powerful party in existence ; though his credit is said to be diminishing with his party, and the credit of his party with the world.

As far as the eye can reach, even taking in the distant church spire and the factory chimnies of

that distant town on the horizon, and the lighthouse of that harbour round the headland, with all the broad acres, villages, and farms, which intervene, own him as their lord;—the Lady Calliroë as their heiress.

There lives no man in real rank above her father, who may write M. M., or MANY MILLIONED, after his name. His position is not a thing of yesterday, still redolent of the vulgarity of recent acquisition. This baronial castle—the princely demesne, surrounding it has descended to him by inheritance; and even half a century ago his family were wealthy; so that he claims priority of fortune over all his fellow senators; a fact which perhaps detracts from his popularity, in an age in which most men plume themselves, first, on the amount of their wealth; and secondly, on the rapidity of its acquisition.

If you had lived sixty years ago (in 1846) you might have seen in a linen-draper's shop, on the left hand side, in Oxford Street—which

was even then a great thoroughfare of the modern Babylon—old Samuel Lofty palming upon his customers gents cheap gloves, cravats and half hose with all the zeal and more than the assurance of his shopmen. In that year he closed his shop and went abroad. He was ruined by the railways; that is to say, he shortly after started as a capitalist. In 1850, he was dead; but the house of Lofty, carried on by his son, was as well known in the commercial as now in the political world.

In 1860, John Lofty purchased this Castle, and was refused a baronetcy.

In 1865, *he* refused an earldom.

In 1870, he bought the imperial jewels of the proscribed house of Romanoff, and generously set up the last scion of the house of Hapsburg in trade as a sugar baker.

In 1880, his son, the present senator, succeeded him. When the civilised conservative states of Europe united into the Federative monarchies, on the establishment of the

senatorial order of MILLIONAIRES, he was one of the first upon the roll; and when, at the happy termination of the war waged with the Democratic Union, the honorary distinction of M.M., or MANY MILLIONED was decreed, he again assumed the first place in the new order.

There is, therefore, no woman breathing whose position in the age in which we live is more enviable than that of the Lady Calliroë.

Sixty years ago, when duchies and earldoms were not mere empty titles,—when they had not become ridiculous, by constant association, during a quarter of a century subsequently, with corns, sore legs, pulmonary complaints, and all the ills and inconveniences that man is heir to,—when, in short, the peerage indicated power and fortune, and that all the names in it had not been converted into pegs on which to hang the puffs of empirics, till some ingenious quack began to recommend his pills by disclaiming all connexion with the aristocracy—in those golden days the Lady Calliroë might

have occupied the position of that young Duchess who smiles from one of Chalon's sketches in the Castle gallery, and still have seen reason to envy her present condition. The delicate state of her health during so many years, and the tender solicitude of her father have, however, retarded her entrance into that society of which she has yet seen but transient glimpses, and in which she longs to mingle and to shine.

The Lady Calliroë hence knows less than most other women of her years and station of politics, not that her nature is unambitious, but that her girlish ambition is still confined to a longing for the admiration of the brilliant throng which has dazzled her from a distance — to the homage of all whose homage can confer distinction, and to the envy of all who should dispute with her the apple. Yet this vision is not the mere aimless dream of a coquette, because it blends, in her imagination, into a little romance of love, of which her cousin Julian

is the hero, she the heroine. When she has gathered at her feet all those who will bow to fortune, power, and broad-lands, and driven her lover to despair, she thinks that then it will be passing sweet, in defiance of usage and the disapprobation of the world, to say to him:—  
“ Julian! here is this hand, which statemen, senators, and millionaires covet;—this hand with all this hand can give, I place in thine, asking only in return that heart surrendered to me long ago.”

How comes it then that she reads through with such deep attention that closely written political epistle? Because love and politics are blent in that artful missive—the sweet that lures so many petticoated politicians deep into the bitterness of its unprofitable lore—and which prompts the Lady Calliroë to ask for the morning papers, so unusual a demand as to astonish the Greek and Hindoo women, who wait upon her in their national attire as formerly it was worn, and as it still glitters in

costume books; for all the world knows that now-a-days the Asiatics wear nothing but Manchester striped cotton goods, and straw hats—that the Greek mountaineers array themselves in wideawakes, and Chesterfields; and that the dresses of their women correspond. The letter which the lady Calliroë perused ran as follows.



## CHAPTER II.

## THE LETTER.

“ You affect indifference to politics, my dear Calliroë, but I am determined to make you a politician in spite of yourself. Considering your position and your prospects, your abilities and your seductive powers, it would really be a sin for you to abstain from participation in public affairs. Politics afford to our sex a pursuit offering far more variety, interest, and amusement than the ordinary occupations of our lives without their frivolity.

Men may indeed rule the world, but we govern the men. Think only what it is when every tribute which female beauty elicits, every mark of homage woman receives—every smile she deigns to smile, has a marked agency upon the destiny of man, that Lord of the creation—sometimes of men by millions—instead of being wasted like the sweetness of the flower, or the warbling of the bird to glad the eye and ear, and be forgotten.

“ Think what it is when you can trace the fate of whole communities to the zeal of a convert you have made, or to the success of plan you have concerted, and—if all these considerations fail to influence you—think what it is to build up magnificently the fortunes of those whom you have judged worthy of your friendship—who love and admire and appreciate you as I do, and who, like myself, would feel eternally grateful for your intercession in my favor. Or I should say rather in favor of one near and dear to me—one on whom the

brightest eyes of beauty beam encouragement in vain, though I believe he would really give up all the world contains to bask in the sunshine of your own. Need I name my brother, your cousin Julian.

“ Poor Julian ! whose thoughts waking or dreaming are of you, and who, notwithstanding my pity, seems so happy in that contemplation—poor Julian seems long to have excluded all but your fair image from his thoughts.

“ Instead of endeavouring to relieve the fallen fortunes of his house, he has remained apathetically indifferent, allowing opportunities and events to flow past him like an unconcerned spectator.

“ If he is now aroused from that apathy it is because the same object which led to his indifference serves as a spur to his ambition—because he has suddenly become conscious that a chasm divides him from his cousin, the heiress—poor and powerless as he is with nothing but the

memory of his family's greatness in a sordid age which would value a live farm-yard bird, for the egg it gives, above the ashes of a dead phoenix.

"This chasm he has however resolved to overleap or perish, as we have so often seen him light-heartedly urge his iron-grey Selim over a desperate leap. There lies indeed but one path open to him—the federative service, and he had once interest with the minister. I trust indeed that he has some still, but this interest has been long diminishing, pretty much in proportion, as my brother has required it, both because it requires it, and because the number of candidates for such offices as he covets is continually increasing.

"Our Sir Jasper is a great minister, and a great man, but he is inscrutable and unapproachable. He has long since half passed his word in our favor, but without any limitation of time for the fulfilment of his promise.

“Now Julian’s necessities are urgent, and his love born ambition cannot brook delay. In the next place, the rationalist party—but hold! I forget that when last we met, you did not and would not understand even the broadest party distinctions. Let me, therefore, explain to you the chief cards of the political game, beginning with the *rationalist* party, of which I must premise by telling you that you are a member, though this piece of information may cause you as much astonishment—but, I trust, less indignation—than was evinced by the very celebrated Lady Cash, who, aware of her deficiencies, commenced a tardy course of instruction under the village school-master, and was outraged past expression, when told that she belonged to the animal kingdom, to a vivaparous class and biped genus, and breathed atmospheric air, through the agency of her respiratory organs—insinuations which her ladyship most wrathfully and abusively re-

butted declaring, "that if she had not always been genteel and fashionable, she was come of honest parents, and a christian woman, who had been baptised, vaccinated and confirmed, and breathed through the mouth and nose like her neighbours."

"Heigho ! with all her ridicules I wish I were Lady Cash. I should not be long in obtaining an interview with Sir Jasper then, nor would our poor Julian be lingering on vague promises, instead of starting in that race in which he considers power and honors only as a means—the necks of rivals and competitors only as a footpath along which he would hurry to the goal—the feet of his fair cousin, the Lady Calliroë.

"To continue with my exposition then, you and I, and your father, and everybody, who is anything are *rationalists*. All who can write M. M. after their name, or who are bound by any sort of tie to any one who can belong *ipse facto* to the rationalist party, or can

only be influenced by motives most unnaturally sinister if they do not.

“All that we rationalists wish is to maintain the legitimate influence of wealth, as the good sense of the age has established it in the federative monarchies. We recognise—as all others do in their hearts—the extent of an individual’s possessions as the most unerring qualification for entitling him to the exercise of power, since the acceptance of this basis allows us to measure the extent of this fitness with mathematical accuracy from thousands down to units. But there is another opinion which our party hold in common, (though some think fit ostentatiously to disavow it,) which is simply, that—whilst we acknowledge the right of admission which the accumulation of wealth gives to the patrician body;—whilst we allow such a person as Lady Cashat once to take precedence of your fastidious friend—we are by no means anxious to afford facilities to the vulgar to gather any large amount of capital together, even though once acquired, in spite of our efforts, we recognise

legally and socially the claim, and absorb its fortunate possessor into our ranks. What can be more rational, since every addition to our number diminishes the distinction of our position, and that even if the rising family only replace another fallen, it is detrimental to that process of social refinement which the perpetuation of power and capital, in certain families, are sure to produce?

“Of this party Sir Jasper is the leader. Of Sir Jasper’s followers your father is one of the most distinguished. Its ascendancy is, however, disputed; and—between you and me—is perilled by the *moderates*. I need not tell you that the Federative representation is composed of the house of *millionaires* in which sit the M’s and M.M’s, and of a house consisting of the representatives of that vulgar mob of petty capitalists who call themselves T.T’s, or *ten thousand men*, though many of them, I am told, can only boast that sum in business credit.

“This party is decidedly hostile to us; and its



members even broach among them the absurd doctrine "that a certain amount of wealth in the hands of a hundred men should give that hundred the same authority as if concentrated in the possession of one individual"—indeed even raise an outcry for some laws to limit the combination of the great capitalists against them.

"Hitherto the *common-sense men*—as they term themselves—and God knows everything about them is *common* enough—men who would make the united monarchy such another den as the Democratic Union,—of which you may judge by its ambassador, once brought to my boudoir to be exhibited, and redolent of the vile smell of tobacco! These common-sense men—who are all for the rights of labour, and who hate T.T's rather worse than M.M's—have hitherto kept the *moderates* in awe.

"The *rationalists* have still great majorities. In the eyes of the world we are still trium-

phant, and Sir Jasper a tower of strength. But I have a terrible secret to confide to your discretion. A hidden but powerful combination menaces our party with expulsion from office after thirty years' enjoyment of the sweets of power.

“Great, general, and repeated losses have embarrassed the affairs of our most valuable supporters, and a very powerful neutral party, who have some time kept neutral—are either joining or mean to join the moderates, and, if so, sooner or later we must fall. Now with the moderates we have no interest; and before this untoward event comes to pass, every effort must be made to obtain for Julian the fulfilment of Sir Jasper's promise. There is at this moment unoccupied the military secretaryship to the vacant governorship of Japan; it will be kept long open as usual by the minister, to play off many candidates. Now I have set my heart, with all the energy of a woman's will, on obtaining this office for

my brother. And I come to you, dear Calliroë, to aid me in an enterprise hopeless without your succour.

“Your father is one of Sir Jasper’s most valuable partisans; you must leave him no repose till you have secured his interest.”

Poor Julian, said the Lady Calliroë, as her color came and went, I would do anything for him in the world, but how speak of him to my father, who I know has even taken his intimacy here unkindly? If I had not been kept in such seclusion—if my introduction to society had not been so long protracted, I might have had opportunities of seeing Sir Jasper himself. He is accessible to my father—why should he not be so to me, and how could he refuse me this boon for my cousin?

At this moment the door of the boudoir opened and Lord Lofty stood in the presence of his only child. He was a man middle-aged, cold, and a little haughty in his aspect, with a high brow—unintellectual although charged

with thought. The frigidness of his demeanour warmed for a moment as he kissed his daughter's eyes and forehead, and sat down beside her on her ottoman.

## CHAPTER III.

"My child," said the senator, "I have come to hold a long conversation with you."

"It is not often that you hold long conversations with your daughter lately."

"No, in truth;" replied her father, passing his hand impatiently over his forehead, as if by that mechanical action to remove a painful impression; "but the duties of my station and a world of cares have lately harassed me."

"And is not that the time, when cares harass you, to seek solace here?"

“No, my Calliroë. Why sadden your young heart with an old man’s perplexities? You are a thing fitted only for joy and sunshine; and, therefore, I choose rather, when I come, to be the harbinger of good tidings than to impress you with the gloom of my forebodings.”

“And if your tidings are so bright, how comes it, my father, that your manner is so solemn?”

“Because the object of my visit, though glad, is solemn, dear Calliroë?”

“Glad yet solemn?” echoed Calliroë, whose curiosity was not the less vividly piqued by this exordium, because two dusty carriages had driven through the park that morning, bearing mysterious visitants,—a circumstance not in itself remarkable, considering the political relations of the senator, but which became so in connexion with the fact that this arrival had caused her father—immutable in his intentions, as the Medes and Persians in their laws—to

abstain from attending a public meeting, for which he had been many days preparing.

“Yes, my child, listen to me. If for some time I have appeared neglectful towards you, believe that I have not been unmindful of your happiness. I see that you look around you as if to say, these birds—these gems—this fairy bower—my Arab palfrey—and my hawks—my castled home in England—and my villa on the *Ægean* sea;—these are mere toys that pall as childhood ripens; but all this is not happiness. I *know* that it is not happiness. I feel, and I always have felt, that this would not suffice to youth, with its disquieting curiosity and flattering hopes—and, may be, with a consciousness of a social station, at which I rejoice, and of personal attractions, in which I take a father’s pride. I have always felt that it was natural that you should seek to mingle in the world; but your precarious health, less than your tender years, obliged me to withhold you from it. If it had not been for this con-

sideration, I should have deemed the gratification of your desire a duty of my station. For it is one of the duties we owe to our order, and, indeed, to society, to maintain that station in its dignity; and a house without female presidency is shorn of half the attractions of its splendor, and of all the graces of its hospitality.

"My father," said the Lady Calliroë, a little disdainfully, "do not waste your eloquence upon me, I do not care a straw for the duties of my station; but I am weary of being secluded from the gay world, in which I long to mingle like others of my age and birth. Six months ago, the greatest of all living doctors told you that my health depended more upon keeping my mind amused than on repose or care; and here I am dying of ennui. I know what you have come to tell me—that you are called to town, and going to leave me in my solitude."

"Not so, my child," replied the senator, "I



believe that you have outgrown the perils which threatened your childhood. I long to see you the cynosure of all eyes ; and I think the time arrived for your introduction to the world."

The air of weariness and langour with which the Lady Calliroë pushed aside her gazelle, as the senator commenced speaking, suddenly gave way to an undisguised expression of joyous satisfaction, as she threw her arms round her father's neck.

He kissed her kindly, but somewhat coldly, on the forehead ; for he was not a man of warm effusions, and continued :—

" Yes, my child, the time is come for you to play your part on the great stage of public life."

" And when — this season ?" asked his daughter, in a tone in which a wild delight was childishly mixed with eager anxiety.

" That," replied the senator, " depends on circumstances. If at all, directly—in a week,

or even in a day, for we may start for town to-morrow; but if it is to be I must protest against the frivolous spirit in which you seem to regard an act so serious as your entrance into life. That act, considering your position, becomes a political event. If on the one hand, your rank gives you singular advantages, on the other, it entails serious charges; and, considering the interests of the order you belong to—of your house, and of the perilous times in which we live, it would be unworthy of your station to embark on a mere frivolous career—on a mere life of fashion, without connecting it with those political aims to which you shew such marked distinction.”

“Now, in truth, my father, you misunderstand me. Launch me into the world, like a bird fresh winged—give me a life of pleasure and of action, and I care not what aim I seek by a path so sweet. As for political aims I may relish their pursuit, though I object, as a spectator, to the prosiness of

politics. I do not even know how far I may not become interested by personal acquaintance with the chief actors in the great game of parties: for their leaders, since you see them, will be all accessible to your daughter?"

"All who shine either in the rationalist or the moderate party," replied the senator, with undisguised satisfaction at this triumph over the indifference of his child.

"Even the celebrated Sir Jasper?"

"Even the great and good Sir Jasper, the head of our party, and the powerful premier of the federate monarchies. He is not, indeed, a man who courts society like his rival, but Sir Jasper himself, my personal friend, will be always accessible to her who represents the house of Lofty."

"Never mind the rival," laughed the beauty, "unless he became a minister."

"That must never be, my little politician; for though right in the abstract that one minister in *esse* is worth twenty in *futuro*, we

are, by our position, placed above that commonplace truth, and must stand or fall, like our whole order, by Sir Jasper."

"And I am, therefore, really to be introduced to the great world immediately? and why do you qualify that promise by a doubt?"

"You are really to be introduced to the great world, to preside over my festivals and banquets, and to uphold the state and dignity befitting the chief supporter of the most powerful of all human beings; but," added the father, taking his daughter's hand, "now for the more serious part of my communication, for which, indeed, you are better fitted than I had hoped in this respect—that there lurks beneath a graceful frivolity which I had never penetrated—a degree of good sense and creditable ambition which will inspire you, I am sure, with resolution and decision equal to the emergency. Listen, therefore, my child:—On the one hand, you are ushered into society with

prospects such as all your sex might envy—rank, power, wealth, and fortune, will be the heralds of your advent into life; but, at the same time, I must confide to you that we live in critical times. It is impossible to say whose fortunes are not undermined—whose social existence is not threatened. We have reached a crisis which will determine for ever the stability of our whole body, and the perpetuity and increase or the overthrow of our wealth, influence, and power. Are you prepared to play a great part at this critical juncture?—do you feel yourself equal to great sacrifices?—to pass at once from childhood into resolute womanhood, overstepping the transition of girlish years?—do you feel that you are equal to the magnitude of the occasion?—that you are capable of taking a decision which will secure the fortunes of your house, the gratitude of your party, and open to you a career of pleasure and of power?”

The Lady Calliroë opened wide her deep liquid eyes of violet-blue, in which there sparkled the expression of a new sensation, self-undefined. Such, in the breast of a caged bird, responds to the wild note of a free mate. Such the young colt, reared on the desert sands, with camel's milk and corn, feels at the sight of a green pasture. Such agitates the heart of a young maid when it flutters in the first palpitations of unacknowledged love. It is the expression of a newly awakened instinct or passion destined perhaps to sink into quiescence, but living though latent."

The words of her father had disturbed in the bosom of the Lady Calliroë a thrill of ambition, which strongly and unconsciously troubled her, though this unwonted sensation subsided again into a feeling more natural to her sex, and defined itself in the hope of furthering the fortunes of her cousin, Julian,

through the influence prospectively held out to her.

“After such an appeal, my father, I must answer you decidedly. I say, therefore, open me the world, and you will not find me wanting in courage, or decision. I fear nothing, excepting solitude, and ennui. Give me the prospect of power—the hope of ready intercourse with those who rule the masses—let me have access to such statesmen as Sir Jasper, and I will dare any peril, make any sacrifice——”

“Scarcely a sacrifice, my child.”

“Well, whatever can further any end you may have in view—unless, indeed, it were, a marriage,” replied the Lady Calliroë, laughing, “though my eloquent and dignified sire would never have introduced such a subject like the guardian or the uncle of an old French comedy.”

The senator bit his lip and was silent for a moment—he then abruptly rose and quitted

the apartment, and a few minutes after returned with a stanger, to whom he presented her, saying, "This is the Lady Calliroë," and then retired without further comment from the presence of his astonished daughter.



## CHAPTER IV.

## THE INTERVIEW.

THE Lady Calliroë was a few instants before she could recover her surprise at this singular introduction and strange *tête-à-tête*.

The personage so unaccountably ushered into her presence, was a man who, in point of age, might have been her father. His countenance was open, and his manner frank and urbane, without either being expressive of absolute sincerity. He was distinguished by an expression rather of sarcasm acquired in self-

defence than of exuberant or native wit, and his whole aspect bore more the impress of perceptive acuteness and plausibility, than of genius. His costume was neat, and such as might have befitted a man within ten years either way of his time of life, his manner was urbane and unpretentious.

The first thought of the Lady Calliroë, when she coupled the apparition of this personage with the mysterious hints let drop by her father, was to divine that he came in the character of a suitor—for she could find no other probable solution to the mystery.

Now, both the age and person of such a candidate, and the mode of his introduction, were so preposterous in her estimation, that an uncontrollable sensation of the ludicrous came over her, and if she restrained herself from open laughter, its mirth played unequivocally about the expression of her lips and eyes.

“I am proud to make the acquaintance of the daughter of my dearly valued friend,” said

the stranger, who saw, at a glance, that he was unknown; "and if I have unceremoniously invaded this retreat, besides the temptation of paying her my respects, I can plead a special motive."

The Lady Calliroë, whose matrimonial thoughts had only wandered from the image of her cousin, Julian, to dwell upon the quick eyes and the lithe limb of youth—on its flowing locks and silky moustache of gold-shot chesnut or of raven black—the Lady Calliroë would have laughed outright at the pretensions of a suitor whose head was growing bald, and whose unsymmetrical rotundity of figure, the restraint of a tight-fitting waistcoat could no longer conceal—only that as she satirically scrutinised his face and figure, it gradually struck her that both were familiar to her eye, though she could not recal having ever seen the personage before her—unless in a dream, or, as a moment's further reflection suggested, in a picture, and

almost simultaneously with this thought, the truth flashed upon her—and the truth was almost startling.

That picture in which her eye had grown accustomed to the lineaments of the face before her, was a portrait that hung in the state-room the full-length size of life, besides being reproduced in busts, engravings, and miniatures in every apartment of the Castle—it was the portrait of the Sir Jasper, the celebrated premier, and consequently the great minister--Sir Jasper stood before her.

Her heart fluttered, for a moment, at finding herself thus, without preparation, in the presence so great a celebrity, but she possessed that presence of mind, peculiar to highly susceptible nervous organizations—and consequently more common in women than in men—which may fail in ordinary times, but is roused by a sudden emergency and great occasion.

She might have felt embarrassed in the presence of any of the political chiefs of whom

he was the supreme leader, and her courage might have failed if her recent wishes had been realised according to her anticipations. If she had sought and found an interview with him in the ordinary course of events, prepared to plead the cause of her cousin, Julian, she might have remained tongue-tied in the great man's presence, but thus brought suddenly in juxtaposition with him, she so rapidly recovered her self-possession—that when saying, “Your father has forgotten to name his old friend,” he held out his hand with an appearance of cordial frankness destined to put her at her ease, or to modify that awe which the discovery of his real character was calculated to inspire, she met his proffered salutation with graceful ease, and replied with perfect self-possession —

“Both my father's friend, and Sir Jasper, are above the formalities of introduction.”

The statesman was somewhat puzzled. He had dreaded too much timidity, and he found

an ease and coolness no less untoward in this young girl, who had not yet even picked up assurance by intermixture with the world.

The man whose persuasive powers guided, or whose combinations influenced classes and masses—whose words were listened to with interest throughout the civilized world, and to whom, at that very moment, despatches from every quarter of the globe were hurrying over land and sea—that man found it necessary to his purpose to convert an inexperienced child to his views, and to obtain her accession to a proposition which even her father had hesitated to make.

This singular necessity was obvious from his being then in her boudoir, hundreds of miles away from the scene of action, where, at the same hour, a political storm was brewing up, which would probably burst that very night, or certainly the ensuing one, in the senate. In this emergency, when his party was waiting for its leader, that leader found himself far

away, face to face, with a young girl whom it was necessary to win over to his views, and to win in the only one brief interview which the pressure of time afforded!

He had been prepared to find her spoiled, and self-willed, and he dreaded the impossibility of placing her, in so brief an interval, sufficiently at her ease, to induce her to listen to his arguments; but he had not contemplated such a reception, marked by a satiric scrutiny, which he, at first, attributed to ignorance of his identity—an idea which her words dispelled, and which had next quickly merged into a quiet self-possession very disquieting to the minister. He had, perhaps, rather have faced the whole opposition in full cry, with nothing but an array of mishaps and disasters to set off against their grievances, than the fulfilment of his present mission.

“Your welcome is gratifying to the friend, and flattering to the statesman,” replied Sir Jasper, adding with assumed *bonhomie*,

“ though, if you judge me to be placed, by my public services, above the formalities of common intercourse, I, using an old man’s privilege, may observe, even to yourself, that the Lady Calliroë is equally beyond the pale of ordinary conventionalities, by her beauty and acquirements.”

The senator’s daughter cast an involuntary glance at the glass opposite to her, as she answered, a little disdainfully:—

“ My acquirements exist only, I fear, in the partial belief of a father ; and if I am what the world calls fair, I have seen in our great cities far greater beauty unnoticed—because in rags.”

“ That is true ; but never united to your talents.”

“ My talents ! I fear they have no being but in your courtesy.”

“ I repeat your talents and your station—or perhaps rather, I should have said, your station and your genius. To speak frankly ; I, the

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premier of the "Federative Monarchies," would hardly be just now conversing with the youthful daughter of my friend, if much was not in her power, and I should not speak so unreservedly if I had not recognised in her an intellectual superiority self-unrevealed perhaps but abundantly manifest to me, accustomed by my avocation, so to say, to read the human character as I run. You are beautiful, my fair child, though I take little heed of beauty ; your station is exalted ; and in your eyes I see the flash of genius and the restless light of aspiration, though indeed you may not feel it ; for some one must discover the gem beneath its crust. I may be mistaken, but I cannot look upon you and believe that you are made to dwell in such insipid retirement—amidst birds and flowers—in a sort of valetudinarian nursery."

Sir Jasper, who had been watching the countenance of the young girl intently, as he spoke, to seize some indication of the effect of

his words, paused for a moment ; and hereupon she interrupted him, saying :—

“ Really, Sir Jasper, I can hardly think that all this is not a dream, when I find myself conversing familiarly with so renowned a statesman ; but can the genius of the legislator, like the *ennui* of a captive girl, only lead him to the natural conclusion, that it would be agreeable to be set free ? or did your penetration lead you to divine that the chief object of my wish to be launched into the world was to find there this very opportunity which has come to seek me ? ”

“ How so ? ” said the minister, inquiringly ; for he could gather from her manner no indication of her meaning, since she spoke half in pleasantry and half in earnest.

“ I was longing ardently only an hour ago to be ushered into life ; but is it possible that could you have divined that my chief motive was the hope of an interview with you ? ”

“ Good Heavens ! ” said Sir Jasper to himself.

"This is awkward. Does the girl think that I am making love to her?"

"Such an avowal," he replied at length, as paternally as possible, "is flattering, my dear child, it would have been dangerously flattering made by such lips as yours before you were born—before I had become dead to all sense of female grace, and had learned to estimate women only by the standard of their political value. If you really wished this interview with one whose exceptional position is far above his merits, it argues I am glad to see at least political curiosity."

"I have none," said the Lady Calliroë. "I sought this interview with the *premier*, for I did not then know Sir Jasper."

"From an intuitive curiosity, which was ambition."

"I had no curiosity, I sought to ask a favor,"

"Frankly spoken," said the minister "so we shall understand each other. I too seek a favor, which, if accorded will leave nothing

which you may not rather command than ask. Nevertheless let me have the grace of ministering to one of your desires whilst my aid may still avail you."

"Your meaning is a mystery to me. My inexperience of the world tempts you into a vein of pleasantry, Sir Jasper; but I shall not hold you the less to your promise."

"Pleasantry, my dear girl?" exclaimed Sir Jasper, glancing anxiously at his watch; "my character ought to guarantee that I am serious. Tell me how I can have the happiness of serving you, and let us dismiss the subject, to proceed into those graver matters for which I crave your ear."

"You are very powerful?" said the Lady Calliroë, musingly.

"You know my office. I have some slight power."

"Though politics are a sealed book to me, I know that you are the leader of the *moderate* party—I know that you are possessed of

colossal power, which I trust may not speedily depart."

The premier started and turned very pale. For thirty years he had been the idol and the chief of the Rationalists;—for thirty years he had held the reins of power. The sarcasm of his foes, and the taunts of a vindictive enemy, during this period, had rebounded innocuously from the triple armour of his self-possession; why does he, therefore, betray such profound emotion at the accidental misnomer of his party by a mere girl, and at the doubt which her words imply of his continuance in office? Because his mind is haunted with the phantoms of the conscience-stricken. The minister feels that his fortunes hang by a thread, and, though his name had grown identified with the championship of the Rationalist party, he is at that moment meditating a desertion to the opposite camp.

To find his plans divined—his apostacy prematurely known, filled him, therefore, with

terror. His first impression was that her father had imprudently confided these dangerous facts to the Lady Calliroë; but an instant's reflection taught him that this was impossible—at least, as regarded his defection—because he had not yet confided his intentions even to the senator. But though this conviction flashed through his mind instantaneously, it did not reassure him; for he asked :

“Where did you hear that I belonged to the Moderate party?” with such increased agitation, that the Lady Calliroë, astonished at the vehemence of his manner, picked up the letter she had laid down beside her on the ottoman.

The sight of this letter so much further alarmed the minister that, either believing or feigning to believe it to be offered for his perusal, he tore it open, and, having glanced hurriedly at the signature, proceeded to devour its contents. The first impulse of the Lady Calliroë was to snatch back the epistle really

ravished from her; but then remembering that the request she had to make was specified in it, and that this perusal would spare her the embarrassment of an avowal, she allowed him to read on.

"I see no mention here of my reported secession to the Moderates," said the minister.

"Pardon my error," replied the Lady Calliroë, "I perceive now that I have confounded *Moderates* with *Rationalists*---I feel that I have said something hurtful to your political susceptibility; but consider that my whole knowledge of politics is derived from that letter."

The minister turned his penetrating eye upon her; there was truth and candour in her accent, and his brow gradually cleared.

The letter he had perused had relieved his anxiety, and given him some data on which to proceed in his negotiation with the senator's daughter; but on the other hand he had become at once acquainted with the certainty of an obstacle on which he had not calculated.

"We must do something for this cousin Julian," said the premier, at length, with a smile, which brought a blush to the cheeks of the Lady Calliroë. "He has a sister who is neither discreet nor modest in her demands. It was impossible that she could know, when she solicited your advocacy, that the combinations of a few hours should raise her fair friend from the seclusion of the nursery to a station of high political importance. Yet, even thus, it does not lie in my power to confide to him such a post as the military secretaryship of Japan! the idea is preposterous."

"Why so?"

"Because it would be without all precedent—because I should outrage a host of my supporters. The military secretaryship, like the governor-generalship, has been months unfilled for fear of indisposing disappointed candidates—I cannot bestow it on a person without plausible claim or qualification."



“He is connected with my father.”

“What of that connexion? Your father scarcely owns him; the very husband of your modest correspondent, his sister, regards him with coolness. We do not live in an age when relationship to those in power confers it; I myself have nearer relatives in obscurity. Your cousin Julian is a dashing, reckless youth, who might still, as an *enfant de bonne maison*, have played his part gallantly half a century since, but now-a-days his follies and his ruined fortunes—which he has no talents to retrieve—have sunk him deep in the public estimation.”

“And when those near and dear to us are sinking, should not that hour of need command our sympathies—call forth our best exertions?”

“You are right, my child; but we must keep within the bounds of the possible. I could as soon make him *governor general* as military secretary. Nevertheless, we will do something, for his plight is sufficiently piti-

able; but now I recollect," added Sir Jasper, affecting the utmost indifference in the world, "it is probable that your cousin would neither thank his sister, nor yourself, nor me, for removing him so far. All the world knows—and all the world, excepting myself, would at once have remembered—that he could not and would not live one day beyond the reach of that fairest, most talented, least scrupulous, and to him most fatal of women—Myrrah."

"It is a calumny!" exclaimed Calliroë, with flashing eyes—"at least to say so now."

"Perhaps," replied the minister, coldly, "it is a week since I saw him in her box—it is a week, indeed, since I was at the opera."

The countenance of the statesman's victim underwent all the sudden and startling change of a southern sky and a summer sea—one moment sunny, calm, and almost lifeless, and the next awakened to an expression of storm and menace, as the lurid clouds darken and the surface of the water gathers into waves. But in

a very brief space her woman-like pride so far triumphed over her emotion, that she made a desperate effort to conceal it. Sir Jasper had, meanwhile, averted his eyes in a manner so natural, that he had not increased her embarrassment by noticing the tear which rose and glistened, and fell burning from her own, though after a brief interval of silence, he resumed—

“Excuse me if I have made an allusion which you may deem indelicate—but it was necessary frankly to expose the motives of my objection—and at any rate such scruples would be absurd in addressing you—as I must do—not as the budding belle of a drawing-room, but as the ally to whom a grey headed politician confides the secrets of his cabinet. Will you now give me your undivided attention?”

“Speak on—I listen,” replied the Lady Calliroë, with assumed composure, and the minister proceeded.

“I was observing then, my fair child, that you are fitted for a very different existence,

and that a singular chance destines you to play a distinguished part, not merely in fashionable life, but in the world of politics. In the days of childhood we are apt to indulge in dreams of first love, just as, at a still earlier age, we long to handle and appropriate the colors of the prism, but when with more matured experience, a woman seeks the practical enjoyments which pre-eminence and the possession of power afford; she sometimes struggles through years to attain that position, which offers itself to you on the very threshold of your career. You have intellect, you have beauty, and you have station, which is, to these, like the polish and setting to the brilliant; your father has political influence and rank—but that rank, station, and influence, are dependent upon wealth; and unhappily, his fortune is sapped to its foundation—so that with all the external signs of opulence, utter ruin menaces your house.”

“Good Heavens—my poor father!” ejacu-

lated the Lady Calliroë; "but he has friends."

"He has true and faithful friends, but alas! the fearful pressure from which he suffers, is general. To be frank with you, I myself, at this moment, require the full aid of his influence. It is, indeed, just now the key-stone of my power. If his fortune fail him, that influence is gone; and, with the loss of its assistance to me—after a struggle of thirty years—I must succumb. Some rash hand, unskilled to steer amidst the shoals and breakers of the times, will seize the helm, impel our class to ruin, and wreck the vessel of the State. Judge therefore, whether I and they would neglect any effort to save his grey hairs from humiliation? Nor have we—"

"All this is to me so strange and startling; do you not jest—do you not exaggerate? Is not my father still possessed of countless villages, farms, parks, manors, harbours and factories?"

"Nominally, he still possesses them, but he

has been one of the chief victims of the great financial struggle. For the real struggle between the Rationalists and the Moderates has been financial. You have heard no doubt how, within the last few years, a strange disease spread universally, destroying, in succession, the nutritive principle of every farinaceous kind of food; you have heard how nations were threatened with famine, till science discovered remedies to stay the vegetable contagion. These remedies were monopolised by our great capitalists. We thought, by possessing ourselves occultly of the sources, whence all human food was derived, to consolidate our power for ever, whilst enlisting in our favor the sympathies of the masses against the clamouring Commons—the minor capitalists—who pressed so hard on our exclusivism. It was a great idea, but through unforeseen chances it has failed. We were a few hundreds who banded our millions of money against the incalculable wealth of hundreds of thousands—but in our body was unity—in

theirs, no common purpose. We all partially involved our property (as your father did too ardently and extensively) with almost the certainty of a hundred-fold return. We should have triumphed--One season more would have repaid us amply, both in wealth, which is power--and in power, which is wealth--had there not been at work some influence more subtle or more fortunate than our own--playing with us the game that we were playing with the people. In the belief that we were only struggling with an adverse fortune, which would change, we were led to the verge of ruin. In truth, that great and glorious body, whose cause I have battled so arduously for a quarter of a century to uphold, bears in itself--I care not to avow it--the seeds of dissolution. Like Milo, a party strove to rend the oak, and the rebound has cramped its power for ever. So much for the apotheose of our order--but a daring intellect outlives the ruin of parties; and when one kind of material fails, still manages with another to build up greatness.

"You may find me tedious, but I must explain. The Moderates are on the verge of triumph. The best of my followers crippled or ruined, like your father. Their lands, their ships, their factories, their stores, are partly, or—like his—entirely mortgaged. A man who has risen from the dust—a man without education, eloquence, or, as was long believed, even common ability—heads a party, into whose hands unaccountably have accumulated these vast gains which we were to have made, and the property so rashly ventured. Even you, no doubt, have heard of the famous Cash, for his celebrity grows every hour. This domain, this castle, the very luxuries that surround you, dear Lady Calliroë, are not your own—they are not your father's—they are pledged to this child of Mammon, whose inconceivable success appears like a resistless fate. This new power—this man of gold has long kept neutral with his adherents and confederates in the political struggle. At



this hour the Moderates believe that they have won him over. They know our weakness, they know that our party can never rally—but, beaten by an inexorable fortune, as they thought—I have yet devised a scheme to baffle their leader, and to snatch the crown of triumph from his brows. I have discovered a means of increasing the power and fortune of my friend, your father, instead of sharing in his ruin; but to effect this purpose I must have the co-operation of his daughter.”

“Mine?” said the Lady Calliroë.

“Yours,” echoed the minister, and he took her hand, tremulous with a vague apprehension. “All that I ask of you is *this*——”

“My hand!” exclaimed the Lady Calliroë, in unutterable astonishment. “Your lady—is she dead then?”

“No, Heaven be praised!” replied Sir Jasper, with a smile; “I should have said, the disposal of that hand—give me but that, and I will place a sceptre in it!”

The beautiful eyes of the senator's daughter flashed as she opened them wide in wonderment, and then she shook her head mournfully without reply.

"Four-and-twenty hours since," continued the minister, "matters were still desperate. The man of fate held in his hand cards with which I would pledge myself to establish again an individual and dynastic sovereignty as of old. I saw him, my eloquence prevailed; I have attached him not to a falling party, but to my individual fortunes, and to those of my faithful friends. As a hostage for his fidelity he agrees that his only son shall lay his prospective wealth and honors at your feet; and he agrees to surrender his mortgages on your father's property, settling it upon yourself; and promising us besides the full support of all his wealth and influence.

"One word of acquiescence from your lips, and to-morrow John Cash and your father join me in the newly constructed cabinet; —

we startle the House, by proposing the very measure at which the Moderates have laboured during years—overturning confusing, annihilating parties and by that step—rearing up from this chaos a new, and unshakable, edifice of power, wherein the beautiful and gifted daughter of my friend will throne as a presiding deity.”

“If I have solemnly promised that I would never give my hand to any but one, Sir Jasper?”

“To one unfaithful and unworthy—to one who loves another—which unbinds your promise—Reflect that at this moment the Moderate party slumbers in the belief, that it has monopolised this man of fate—at this moment beauty, youth, and fashion are plotting to secure the heir to his colossal wealth. I have won them both. I have brought them to your feet, in time to save the grey hairs of your father — in time to save us all—in time, by that one word of consent, which you can speak, to give life to a mighty

combination---to stir to its foundations the very frame-work of society, and to fill the civilised world with wonderment."

The Lady Calliroë looked up, and her eyes flashed with an expression of elation which a moment after subsided into sadness—"poor Julian."

"Poor Julian!" echoed the minister, "to whom you will shew, in all its brilliancy, the pearl he cast aside to toy with a worthless shell---poor Julian whom your generosity will save from ruin."

A flush of colour rose again to the tempted beauty's brow, and her eye sparkled with another flash, like the beam reflected from a dark, blue billow. Her ambition and pride were not less roused than her pity; but deeming herself only a victim to her duty and magnanimous compassion, she drew from this self-deception a feeling of enthusiasm.

"If I were to say yes--if I were to yield to this necessity, I must make one stipulation in favour of my cousin Julian."

“Noble girl,” said the minister, “he shall be cared for. I will pledge myself to satisfy him with some post less embarrassing to confer than that military secretaryship.”

“Listen, Sir Jasper,” said the Lady Calliroë, with solemnity, “either you have deceived me and Julian loves me, or you speak truth, and he loves another. In the one case, he has all the sympathy of my soul; in the other, my forgiveness. In one, I must strive that he does not curse the memory of her who abandoned him to his poverty and ruin; in the other, I shall pray that he may be happy, and provide that he shall bless the memory of her whom he deceived. I am ready—the statesman’s victim is ready for the sacrifice—but the price of this sacrifice shall be Julian’s happiness. I will discard the romantic dreams of my girlhood to enter on the cold realities of life; but the last act of that transition—its inexorable condition shall be to shape out a magnificent destiny for Julian. Did you not

say that the governor-generalship of Japan was vacant ?”

“ It will not be so long. It is to be the dowry of the Lady Calliroe’s husband.”

“ It is a great office ?”

“ One that your father might covet.”

“ Then you must give it to my cousin Julian.”

“ Impossible !” exclaimed the minister.

“ Then my answer to your proposal is a negative.”

“ That answer, rash girl, would be ruin.”

“ Ruin will only bring me where I leave him. All barrier will be levelled then, I will seek him out and hear from his mouth whether his heart be mine or the actress Myrrah’s.”

“ This is sheer madness,” said Sir Jasper.

“ I cannot entertain the matter now, but we will hold council on it afterwards.”

“ No ; you have no consent of mine, unless you pledge your honor to confer the post in question on Julian.”

“ He shall have the military secretaryship.”

"You told me that you could as easily make him governor-general."

"A figure of speech. I must have thought I was addressing the Commons. It is impossible!"

"Then in the name of my departed mother I declare that I reject your suitor."

The minister looked at his watch again. Time pressed.

"It is a matter I cannot alone decide."

"Then farewell," said the Lady Calliroë, rising to withdraw. "If the victim be not worth its price---you have my refusal now and for ever."

"Stay," said the minister; "if it must be, I will brave the world, I will make your cousin Governor. You have my word of honor, and I have your consent?"

"Yes; but before the irrevocable act takes place his commission must be signed, that I may forward it with the farewell which I take of him and of my woman's heart for ever."

"Your compliance is noble!" said the minister, carrying her hand respectfully to his lips.

"To-morrow's sun will see a tottering house re-established; a perilled monarchy redeemed; a veteran minister still the most powerful of its subjects. And this he owes to the greatness of your soul, and for this he will ever yield to you the tribute of his homage. I can only observe that time presses and that events tread fast upon our heels."

"I am ready," said the Lady Calliroë. "The sacrificial wreath is round my temples—where the advantage of delay?"

"This is too prompt," thought the premier, and he added aloud, "preliminaries once arranged, we may expect your future father-in-law every hour. The bridegroom will be here this night. But lest you should judge of the son by the father I have his portrait here."

She took the portrait, but laid it down beside her without bestowing on it a look.



The minister pressed her hand in his and said, paternally:—

“God bless you, my child,” then carrying it again to his lips, he added, with solemnity, “and Heaven prosper you, Madam, in your greatness!”

When he was gone, the Lady Calliroë buried her face in the cushions and sobbed aloud, pushing aside her gazelle, which, named after her cousin, insinuated its head under her white hand, as she said, audibly:—

“Julian, Julian, what have I done? Where are you, Julian?”

## CHAPTER V.

## THE TRAVELLING COMPANION.

THE fortunes of Julian Beauvoir were very desperate. He could not venture to shew himself in any of the capitals ; and, though there was no prospect that delay would better his affairs, his only thought appeared to kill the present hour. In fact, he had always lived in the present, and, reckless of the future, sought chiefly some occupation which might drown reflection. Such had been, during weeks past, his pursuit, —such it was now, only that there mingled

with it a vague and indefinite hope, which he dared only indulge in his most sanguine moments, that ruin might still be retrieved through an alliance with his wealthy cousin.

Originally received with kindness by her father as the child of a near and dear relative, he had for many years access to the Lady Calliroë; but as the power of the senator rose, and as his nephew declined in the social scale—though still received in the retirement of the country, it was no longer on a footing of equality, and as the period of the introduction of the heiress into society approached, his reception had grown gradually more chilling.

If the senator had any suspicion that the sisterly affection of his daughter had ripened, as it grew, into first love, he took little more account of this circumstance than to consider it as a slightly untoward event, which might give her some childish pain, but of which the impression would be rapidly obliterated on her entrance into l

Nothing, in truth, could exceed the wild improbability of such a plan in the estimation of Julian's scheming sister, and even sometimes in his own ; but he had renewed with such success the gallantries of a past age, and had found his follies popularly received with such unaccountable indulgence as to be sometimes led to imagine that the ardent temperament of the Lady Calliroë, and the paternal affection of the senator for his only child might be worked upon to produce a social result in his favour, exceptional to its present spirit. His sister had encouraged the prosecution of his suit not with any belief in its success, but because she foresaw in it a means of interesting the uncle in favour of his nephew, whether through the importunities of his daughter, or through the necessity of relieving himself from his presence.

Julian was at this moment meditating a decisive visit to the Lady Calliroë.

It was the year in which, in due rotation,

the parliament of the Federative Monarchies assembled in the capital of France.

The impending debate would necessarily call thither all the supporters of the premier, and hence it was probable that he should find his cousin alone, a circumstance infinitely desirable in itself; but then it was just possible that a visit in the absence of his uncle might have been provided for by his orders, and would prove a bar not only to the projected but to any future interviews.

In this perplexity Julian Beauvoir looked out of his carriage down the diverging railway lines, passing his long slender fingers—pinkly transparent like the inside of a shell—through the long ringlets of his raven locks, and then pressed abstractedly to his lips and against his no less pearly teeth, the large pearl which formed the handle of his taper horse-whip.

His page seemed waiting the decision of his capricious master, as he held back, with some

difficulty, by a silken rope, a pair of enormous but beautifully symmetrical greyhounds, straining the richly chased links of their golden collars, as they strove to attract the notice of their owner.

The eyes of the bystanders were however diverted from him by the arrival of a fresh train, from which three equipages, bearing on their panels the distinctive sign of the son of a *millionaire*, and filled with his suite, were shifted to another line. The owner of these equipages meanwhile alighted to stretch his legs. He was a young man of middle stature. His face was round, his features not uncomely, and their expression, both as to intellect and distinction, that of literal mediocrity. In fact everything about him—mind, person, stature, and bearing, might have been characterised by the same term. But this monotonous level—alike without salient points of superiority or the inequality of deficiency—formed a very solid substratum, whereupon the addition of

rank and wealth sufficed, in the estimation of the world, to constitute a most dignified superstructure.

This personage, Eustatius Cash, at once exchanged signs of friendly recognition with Julian; and in a few seconds they were strolling arm in arm upon the platform.

Julian observed, that he half meditated an invasion of his uncle's seat. His companion replied, that, by a singular coincidence, he too was about to pay a passing visit thither. He therefore pressed him to decide and share his carriage. Julian consented, and a few minutes afterwards the pair were whirling and rushing or rather *projected*, at the rate of a hundred and fifty miles an hour, towards their destination.

It must not be hence be deduced that Julian and young Cash were friends, at least in any other sense of the word than that which implies familiar intercourse; on the contrary, the reminiscences of that intercourse were marked

by the recollection of ill-will and rivalry. The sight of Julian conjured up in the mind of his travelling companion three distinct scenes very far from grateful to his memory, and little calculated to inspire him with anything but aversion.

It recalled to him the time of his first entrance into fashionable life, when his father was emerging from obscurity to take his place amongst the wealthy of the land.

It recalled his reception when still timid and inexperienced, by a circle of whom Julian was the oracle, and he the butt, together with all the plesantry heaped upon him by those who sought to make him expiate his prospective millions through their sarcasm.

As there was nothing prominently ridiculous, or even prominently marked about him, this feeling had gradually subsided, and friends, parasites, and admirers had gathered round him; but then he became an unsuccessful rival of Julian's, who was dissipating the capital of



his heritage against the annual allowance, doled out somewhat parsimoniously for his means, to Eustatius by his father.

Another phase had followed. His experience grew, and so did the world's respect, as his father's colossal wealth accumulated and his power increased. Julian's influence, on the contrary, had declined; he had even quitted the field, and was, indeed, only returning from a soujourn in the East, when once more they came in contact.

Julian was then penniless; Eustatius Cash the most discreetly magnificent magnate of the Federative Monarchies.

At this period (1905), in the full zenith of her popularity, of her glory, and her charms, still bloomed the celebrated Myrrah, of whom all the world remembers that she united the gifts, the frailty, and the beauty of an Aspasia, a Siddons, a Julia Grisi, and a Ninon. de L' Enclos.

Long success and unceasing adulation had

made this woman so impatient in the gratification of her wishes, that a whim, if thwarted, became a necessity of existence in her estimation. She made the fortunes of managers, scattered the fortunes of admirers, and, as usual, neglected to secure her own.

On the occasion in question, this self-willed and reckless personage had drawn her vast salary, in anticipation, binding herself by a heavy penalty to the manager to perform during the Paris season. No sooner, however, was her contract signed than she was seized with an irresistible longing to spend that winter in the south; but the manager was inexorable: he claimed the restitution of the salary she had anticipated, and enforcement of the penalty she would incur; and the salary alone was in itself a fortune. A half century back it would have sufficed to fee two hundred subalterns or curates, or sixty generals, or a brace of bishops, or one agitator. In this dilemma none of her many admirers were forthcoming,

and in her necessity she found only Eustatius Cash—whom she had treated with contumely—who would aid her; but Eustatius, only allowing himself to be won over by degrees, made his own stipulations. The actress found it necessary to play to him from the stage in the eyes of the whole capital—to exclude those who displeased him from her suppers, and to wear his bouquets in her bosom and in her hair; nay, he farther imposed the hard condition, that, if she wintered in Madrid or in Italy, she should spend that season in retirement, and not appear, as she had meditated, on the stage; and lastly, he made the odious stipulation of inflicting on her his distasteful company. On these terms only did he consent to relieve her from the thralldom of her tyrannical creditor.

When all was arranged, and that she had yielded to these conditions, the manager was sent for and ushered one morning into the presence of Eustatius and the lady in her boudoir. But he did not come unaccompanied

—Julian was with him. Though Julian had been a favourite once, nothing could be more provoking at that unpropitious moment than his presence, but the vexation of the actress was quickly dispelled—for the manager at once introduced Julian as the present proprietor of his lease, contracts and engagements.

Julian had been on his return from the east, two thousand miles away when he received, at the same time, the announcement of an inheritance, and an account of the persecution of his quondam friend. In forty-eight hours he had traversed the space dividing them—he had bought with his whole heritage the rights of the manager, and he came in the very hour of need to restore her liberty to Myrrah, by throwing the receipts and contracts she had signed into the fire.

The actress, so graciously set free, turned maliciously to her would-be protector, and pressed him to join herself and Julian, and make a fourth with the manager at the very

breakfast-table, originally spread in his honor. This affair was universally bruited, and not the less impressed upon the diletanti, that it was the means of securing the charming vocalist to them for the season—for no sooner was Myrrah freed from her odious contract, than—whether through waywardness or through gratitude to Julian—she lost all longing for the south, and performed steadily throughout the season.

All these recollections rankled in the bosom of Eustatius beneath an exterior placidly cordial. As for Julian, he almost assumed credit to himself for having forgotten and forgiven these passages of their mutual history, as he would assuredly have done had the case been reversed—so incapable was he of bearing ill-will to any human being. Though he had never been at any time on terms of cordiality with his present companion, he had greeted him with sincere satisfaction, because too delighted to meet so unexpectedly with one of

his own station, and because an involuntary deference had succeeded to the contempt with which he once professed to regard the heir to the millions of old Cash. Julian, indeed, once idolised by a set now dispersed and broken up, was an outcast of humbled fortunes, who could not even aspire to a seat in the Lower House; whilst Eustatius had gradually conquered a place in all men's estimation, by sheer weight of metal, as it was said, and had risen to the Lower House of T. T.'s, and from the Lower House to the House of *Millionaires*—in fact, from insignificance to importance, whilst Julian had been declining from importance into insignificance.

Nevertheless, as they proceeded towards their destination, the vanity of Julian was gratified by the idea of showing this interloper how well he stood in the good graces of his fair cousin, and Eustatius took a malicious pleasure in leading him to compromise himself upon this subject, thereby to heighten the

mortification which discovery of the real purpose of his visit would occasion—a discovery by which the young *millionaire* proposed suddenly to prostrate his rival, and to avenge upon him so many former triumphs and indignities. And in truth, nothing could be conceived more incredibly astounding than an explanation that the purpose of his visit was a hurried marriage with the heiress of the house of Lofty, with whom her cousin seemed to believe that he would not even be allowed an interview. Both the travellers were therefore in high spirits. Towns, fields, and stations seemed to fly rapidly past them, and at length their carriages were landed upon *terra firma*; and, with a bright sky and shining sun overhead, they drove rapidly to the castle.

The avenue through which the horses galloped was not in the best condition: the deep ruts were filled with recent rain and mud, and the footpath presented one series of little pools.

Their attention was attracted as they drove along by the somewhat slender figure of a man, habited in professional black, and endeavouring with the utmost care to pick his way amidst the scanty patches of dry gravel on the path. He appeared, indeed, to study with minute interest, the hydrography of a whole system of puddles—sometimes advancing his foot along a narrow isthmus, or stepping on to a peninsula or island, and then cautiously receding to attempt a different passage. The garments of this individual, which were rusty and threadbare, were somewhat scanty. His coat cuffs betrayed several inches of the wrist, and his trowsers too short and too tightly strapped down, occasioned an almost ludicrous restraint in his movements.

“What queer figures one does unearth from holes and corners in the country,” said Julian.

“Romeo and Juliet’s apothecary, or a strolling player all ready for the part,” observed his companion; and at this moment, as he



raised his glass to his eye to take a minute survey of the stranger, the postillion urged his horses, and the carriage-wheels sank splashing into a deep rut, and covered the passer-by from head to foot with mud.

There was something so comical in this sudden and overwhelming frustration of the hopes of an individual so assiduously bent on traversing without spot or stain that very ill-conditioned road, that Julian and his fellow-traveller burst into a loud fit of laughter, which, together with the rattling of the carriage-wheels, drowned any exclamation which the sufferer might have made.

“Poor devil,” said Julian, at length, when he had ceased laughing, “give him a lift in one of your carriages.”

“In his present condition,” replied Eustatius—“what would my people say to such a proposal? No—I have no pity for a fellow of that sort—his rusty black speaks volumes. Why should one class be ever treading on the heels of another? Why is he not in highlows

and fustian, and a smock frock?—he need not then have picked his way so daintily.”

As they turned the base of the hill the castle rose majestically in view, and here again the Lady Calliroë became the subject of conversation.

“So because the senator is absent, you think there is no chance of seeing your fair cousin?”

“How should there be?” replied Julian, “at least in the ordinary course of things. She is not out, and therefore how could she receive a stranger? but,” he added, with some fatuity, “I am one of the family you know, and I will take care that you are not entirely disappointed;—if I cannot obtain you admission to her boudoir, you shall see her ride. We always take a canter in the park in the absence of old Lofty, a collation will be served you in the oak rooms, and we will mount under your window.”

By this time they had reached the lodge of the park, which stretched invitingly before

them. Situated on an eminence, and admirably drained, it was perfectly dry, and they alighted. At this moment, the man in the threadbare suit presented himself at the gate. He had reached it at the same time as they, because having been rendered reckless by his accident, he had taken a short cut across the brow of the hill, regardless of the wet and mud in which he was now embroiled to the ankle, to say nothing of the stains yet undried on the upper part of his garments. He was sternly refused admission into the park by the gatekeeper, on account of his appearance even after having said something to the man in an under tone, which somewhat mollified him, for he replied more civilly, but quite as resolutely.

"It is more than my place is worth—besides, if you reach the castle, I tell you that to-day you cannot see him."

"This is hard, on a matter of life and death," said the stranger, about to turn away, when Julian accosted him.

"They refuse you admission? then come

with me. It is through our fault that you are in this disarray—we owe you some compensation. Whom do you wish to see at the castle?”

“The senator.”

“The senator is absent,” said Julian.

“No—he is here,” replied the stranger, and the porter, by a respectful nod of the head, corroborated his assertion. The nephew felt a little disconcerted at this announcement, but his word was passed, and he turned to his *protégé*, and said—

“Well, I will introduce you into my uncle’s presence—follow me.”

“I will *accompany* you,” said the stranger, resolutely and with emphasis, whereupon, the son of the *millionaire*, for the first time, paused to direct upon this personage a scrutinising look, but he was met by a glance which made him speedily withdraw his own—so full it was of depth and determination, and of a disquieting kind of haggardness which involuntarily troubled him.

He then first perceived that this personage was young, and bore about him that rare and peculiar stamp which rendered all possible connexion between him and the ridiculous, utterly incompatible. Eustatius Cash passed his arm into that of Julian, and they proceeded in silence, the stranger not following, but accompanying them, as he said, for he walked in a parallel direction, a few paces distant from their side.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE INTERVIEW.

THE seneschal of the senator's household received the new comers. He was a courteous man of middle age, with all the discrimination fitting to his office, whose duties, indeed, he in everything was eminently calculated to fulfil, even to the minute particulars of manner and personal appearance.

One glance sufficed to shew that he was as peculiarly adapted to that baronial castle, once a Ducal residence (of which he did the honors),

as the heron to its heronry, the falcon to its mew, the snail to its shell, or the bird to its nest.

He moved about amidst its long galleries and gothic chambers with speech and bearing half-courtly, half-chivalric, and his very features, from their strong resemblance to the coroneted portraits on the walls seemed to render him a living impersonation of the statesmen, warriors and dames, who frowned in dignity or smiled in grace upon you from their canvas. This likeness is not imaginary, because Hugh Fitz-Stephen Upland (entitled to the Marquisate of that name if his family had not in his person outlived the abolition of these feudal titles), is one of the last lineal descendants of the former owners of the castle and domains of Upland. He is said to regard this circumstance with secret pride and satisfaction, though possessing too much knowledge of the world to treat with any thing but affected pleasantry the old title by which he is some-

times banteringly addressed, and which it would be as absurd to assume at the present day, as to have sported the style of Knight of Malta, or Grand Prior, half a century since. Statistics and fashion, indeed, have perhaps had more share than any other social causes in the change of feeling, which has caused society to regard with so much contempt all pretensions to family antiquity.

When, for instance, in England, statistics proved that out of every hundred registered voters, eighty-eight were descended from William Rufus, or Edward the Crusader, and ten more from the followers of William their progenitor, the Herald's office would have been exploded, and the Garter King-at-Arms might never have pocketed another fee, if, from this very circumstance, a fresh impetus had not ingeniously been given to the thirst of distinction natural to all ambitious races--for it is needless to repeat what large sums are expended at the present time to obtain from that very Herald's office



vouchers that a family is *not* descended from the Norman Conqueror, or what fees are added for authentication of the fact that a house is so far distinguished from the vulgar herd as *not* to have had an ancestor amongst the Domesday Barons. It is true that these vouchers are now becoming so common even in the Democratic Union, that in another twenty years there will perhaps remain none but the Papuans, the Hottentots, and the inhabitants of Cochin China, who will not be possessed of authentic proofs that they are none of the Conqueror's seed, and none but they who will consequently go down to posterity as his descendents.

The seneschal, Hugh Fitz-Stephen Upland, had received his cue, concerning Eustatius Cash : but with regard to the unexpected apparition of Julian, he had no instructions, and at any other time he would, without hesitation, have courteously expelled the seedy stranger, but he had tact enough to discern that some-

thing unusual was passing in that mansion, whose proprieties he had never seen so singularly violated during thirty years that he had presided over his department. He had learned or divined that there was, under that ostentatiously ceremonious roof, a cabinet minister incognito, a Bishop *in petto*, and an ex-Lord Chancellor, who had alighted under the disguise of a tartan shooting-jacket, and from a branch-railway-omnibus-conveyance. He had farther seen the Lady Calliroë in tears—her favorites impatiently set aside—her palfrey dismissed without its customary lump of sugar—and her father, the most dignified, and self-possessed of men, plunged into such profound abstraction that he had actually shaken hands with the astonished groom of the chambers, who came in white kid gloves, to present him with a letter on the salver of jewelled gold, subscribed by the faithful city of Moscow at the coronation of that last of the Romanoffs, whose birth-place is recorded now by a gigan-

tic knout of bronze on a granite pedestal, adorned with alternate skulls and medallions of brass, illustrative of the family murders of this house, which are beautifully executed in relief on this monument, doubly raised to the infamy of that Imperial race, and to the folly of preceding generations, which endured its rule.

In this state of things, the seneschal felt so much at sea that he hardly knew what course to pursue, and doubtful whether the stranger might or not be an authorised performer in these singular proceedings. He consequently begged them all to be seated. The son of the *millionaire*, with a deference of which the dignified formality was flatteringly respectful—the unexpected Julian, with polite urbanity—and the seedy stranger with a frank, off-handed kind of hospitality. A moment's reflection taught him however, that as regarded Eustatius Cash, his instructions were definite; and he therefore led him to the apartments pre-

pared for his reception, profiting by this opportunity to learn the pleasure of the senator respecting his nephew Julian.

Lord Lofty, on hearing of this unexpected arrival, betrayed unusual indignation and impatience, proceeding straightway into the presence of the intruder. Nothing, he thought, could be more impertinent than such a visit at that particular crisis, and he consequently resolved most unceremoniously to dismiss his scape-grace relative.

“Julian,” said the uncle, coldly, extending two fingers in return for his nephew’s proffered hand—“this visit is unexpected; and, notwithstanding the deep interest I take in your welfare, I must plainly tell you, uncalled for at such a moment.”

“I should not have intruded,” replied Julian, somewhat crest-fallen, “if I had not accidentally met with young Cash, an old acquaintance, coming to pay you a flying visit. He offered me a seat in his carriage, and I could

not resist the temptation of enquiring after you and my fair cousin Calle."

"This is embarrassing," said the senator to himself. "You are not then aware of the object of that visit?"

"If it be political," answered Julian, "I should grieve to prove any obstacle or interruption—and in that case, I will not prolong my stay—or I will repair to my cousin, whom I have not yet greeted, without farther tax upon your valuable time."

"Julian," said the senator, "the object of that visit is at once political and more than political; in one sense, indeed, it personally interests yourself. For you, too, will be indirectly and beneficially affected by the event to which I am alluding. But whilst not unmindful of your future, I must, at the same time, frankly confess to you, that I consider it a duty incumbent on me to mark my profound regret at your neglected opportunities, and my unqualified reprobation of your conduct, by

requesting that you will spare me the pain of your presence at my daughter's marriage."

"At Calliroë's marriage!" exclaimed Julian, who was flattering himself a moment before that he should play an indispensable part in that ceremony, whenever it took place.

"At my daughter's marriage," repeated the senator. "A great alliance—she weds the only son of the great millionaire, Cash.

"Eustatius Cash!" ejaculated the staggered Julian, who could hardly falter out—"when?"

"To-morrow," said the senator, "Sir Jasper gives away the bride. The Bishop of Manchester performs the nuptial ceremony; and the civil authority will be represented—the marriage contract overlooked, by the ex-chancellor, Lord Besom and Variable.

Julian changed color and fell back in his chair, so overpowered by this astounding communication as to be deprived of utterance.

At this moment the senator first perceived that they were not alone, for his eye caught,

in the recess of a window, the pale, anxious features of the stranger, contrasting so strikingly with his patient and immoveable attitude.

"Who is your companion?" asked the host of Julian, without averting his gaze from the youth in black, who answered for his protector.

"One whom your nephew has helped into your presence on an errand of life and death."

"What is your pleasure?" asked the senator, looking in astonishment from Julian to the mud bespattered stranger.

"Life is departing," replied the youth. "I come to seek your aid."

"I am not the dispenser of life. Whom am I addressing?"

"One of your own tenants."

"Your name?"

"I inhabit the last cottage on the Burnside hill," replied the youth, evasively.

"Have I not got a steward?" said the senator, and then he added, shortly, and as if some

circumstance suddenly recurred to his memory. "Ha, I see—you are one of the people who have squatted on my property. I can encourage no tenants in the parish, who cannot prove ostensible means of livelihood. You are over bold to intrude into my presence. What do you want with me, or from me?"

"For myself, nothing—"

"Young man, go to my steward, or to my almoner."

"It would be useless; it is to you, my lord, that my request must be made. I come to beg of you a bunch of grapes."

"This is strange;—and not a little presumptuous."

"I seek this favour for a dying man."

"I have no grapes, if I were disposed to humour the fancies of all invalids, the crop has failed here as everywhere."

"I have heard so from your gardener; but I know from your gardener, too, that you have



preserved one magnificent bunch in your hot-house ;—let me have that.”

“ A modest request, upon my honor !”

“ I ask it not to gratify a caprice, but as a remedy—a remedy by which a life may be prolonged.”

“ And who tells you that a bunch of grapes will prolong life ?”

“ Science.”

“ Are you a physician ?”

“ I am literally a physician ; and appreciation of the human frame is one branch of my knowledge.”

“ Then, my young doctor, you must study more deeply before your word suffices to convince me that health or life can depend on a bunch of grapes.”

“ Good God !” said the stranger, “ unless I had that conviction, would I have besieged your gate as I have done, subjecting myself to mortification and refusal ? and can you weigh

a bunch of grapes against even a chance of the life of a fellow creature?"

"Enough," said the senator; "I refuse you upon principle. Even if it were true that a bunch of grapes—being a rarity for my table—could save the life of a child of the people, it would be not only a political inconsistency, but an injustice towards its fellows, to give that bunch of grapes; and I have too much paternal love for the people to commit such an injustice. Now mark me, young man, Providence, for its own inscrutable purposes, has made a distinction between the poor and the rich. In its all-wisdom the poor of to-day are the rich of to-morrow; the rich of to-day are poor; but whilst Providence allots to man a state of poverty—in all countries and in all ages, the bread of sorrow has been his portion. It is our duty, and it should be our chiefest pleasure, to alleviate his condition as far as practicable without diminution of our own enjoyments; but moral and economical considerations

fix this alike as the limit of such endeavours. Now I am perfectly aware that in every hamlet—in every factory—in every lane of crowded cities, there linger innumerable wretches, any one of whose individual lives I might save by substituting rich diet, generous wines, and wholesome air, for their meagre fare and pestilential atmosphere.

“ There are as many more on whom consumption preys in the north, or panting in the south for the bracing breezes of the north, whose health I might restore, by costly transference to a more congenial clime. I might, indeed, benefit some hundreds, perhaps some thousands, if I were to sacrifice the roof that covers me—the lands that stretch around—the elegancies which surround me ; but these I should only select invidiously to leave millions more to perish ; and how much more invidious then would be an individual preference ? ”

“ And if all your class were to contribute ? ” asked the stranger. “ Yet, my lord, I appeal

not to your reason, but to your heart. There are cases in life where impulse only guides us—how otherwise would the mother give her milk to rear a child which she knows may prove ungrateful and will certainly divide her scanty morsel of bread? Nature, which has given the mother milk, has implanted in the breast of man a kindly feeling towards his fellows. To this feeling I appeal. Give me that bunch of grapes, of which the fruit cannot but taste bitter on your table connected with the thought that its price has been a human being's life."

"Impulse is for the people; forethought and it may be pain for those who watch the fold," replied the senator; and then he added, peremptorily, "enough. You have surprised this interview. My time is precious, young man. You have my answer;—may it prove a moral lesson."

"It *shall* prove a moral lesson," haughtily replied the stranger, whose pride had all along been ill-repressed by his solicitude. "When the hour of reckoning comes—when the poor and

the oppressed are triumphing—when their only impulse is hate of their oppressors—then they shall listen only to that impulse and leave to these oppressors pain and regret of the irrecoverable past !”

“ Come! Come!” said a groom of the chambers, whom the senator had summoned, to cut short the stranger’s importunities, hurrying him out, just as Julian and the senator were startled by the sudden intrusion of his daughter.

Julian’s greyhounds, escaped from their leash, had found their way to the Lady Calliroë. On inquiry she had learned that he was with her father, and, knowing how irritating this circumstance might prove—how painful the disclosure to Julian, of the event to which she had consented---she forced her way into their presence, and stood before them as the stranger was led away and hurried to the castle gate through rows of grinning lacqueys, who were rapidly being marshalled in their state liveries and holiday array.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE REJECTION.

THE Lady Calliroë was pale and self-possessed, though her compressed lip, the fevered animation of her glance, and the dilating veins, shewed that this external calm resulted from a resolute and painful effort.

Her eyes met those of her cousin; but neither spoke.

Julian felt then, as he had felt before, ready to sink into the earth. Vexation, wounded pride, and awe of the great personages—whose

sanction invested the astonishing event with so much circumstance and pomp — still kept him speechless. Julian, though reckless of his person, and singularly daring in his sphere, was yet little calculated for antagonism with overwhelming superiority; and his demeanour did not shew to advantage when contrasted even with the glance of hostility and defiance with which the poor stranger returned the contemptuous looks of that inhospitable household, as he strode away.

“Calliroë,” said the senator, at length, “has Sir Jasper left you?”

“Sir Jasper has left me—resigned to your wishes; but I come to confess to you, my father, that if you bartered my hand before consulting me, I, your daughter, committed the error of promising that hand without your knowledge. None, but I, should announce the violation of my promise; and I was writing now to Julian—”

“Ha!” said the father, directing a stern and

penetrating glance on Julian. "This, indeed is new to me. My child, dismiss the memory of such folly. Your affianced bridegroom is beneath this roof; you must see the propriety of retiring."

"Not so, my father. I obey you—I wed another; but until then I will be my own mistress. I have always been determined. Imagine whether I am less so now, with so brief a period of freedom before me. You must leave me with Julian: he must unbind me from my promise, or I will die unmarried."

"Julian must quit these walls at once. The prosperity of our house depends on that marriage, and in its prosperity our kinsman Julian shall not be forgotten."

"It is true that I have my cousin's promise," said Julian, gaining courage, "though little account is taken of a woman's heart when her hand is made the subject of a bargain."

"Leave us," said the Lady Calliroë, "alone ten minutes and Julian shall quit us."



The senator hesitated, and then, knowing his daughter's wilfulness, thought it best to put an end to this painful scene by compliance.

When they were alone the senator's daughter addressed her cousin bravely. "Julian, this is a sad meeting—it was rash to come," and then burst into tears.

"My own Calliroë!" said Julian, in whose mind the only defined sensations were pity and admiration of the weeping girl, and a burning wish to thwart and mortify his rival. "My own Calliroë. Thank Heaven you are not yet another's. Be resolute as you are true—be firm as you are beautiful, and we may yet be happy."

He seized her hand and attempted to carry it to his lips, but she pushed him back.

"I am not Myrrah!"

"Fiends!" said Julian, "they have poisoned your mind against me."

"Heaven knows how truly, Julian; but be this as it may, I have yielded to my fate."

"But that compliance you may still recal. You are the inheritress of power and wealth—why need you seek power or wealth in marriage? Oh, my Calliroë—my love—my own—it is not too late;—be faithful to your vow, and the future is our own."

"Not even the present," said the Lady Calliroë, shaking her head mournfully. "Listen to me, Julian. All this has been as sudden as a dream. At this time yesterday I may have doubted of your truth, but I had no idea of anything beyond. To-day I discover that I am heiress only to a father's ruin. To-day, statesmen and ministers track me to my boudoir, making me the propitiatory offering for their and his salvation. What would you have had me do?"

"What did your heart dictate?" asked Julian. "Did it not occur to you to share poverty with *me*?"

"No!" replied Calliroë—"I thought it better to accept splendid misery—I thought of

my father's ruin—of your's Julian—I doubted of your love—and I made your future a stipulation of compliance. Sir Jasper offered at last the vacant military secretaryship."

"My noble cousin!" said Julian, "it was worthy of you; to speak frankly, yesterday I loved you well, and for such a post—to be again somebody and something—I would have removed into another planet, but at this hour my feeling is changed. You shall not be the sacrifice to my fortune; fling back their gifts and offers with disdain, and come to love and me."

"One moment," answered Calliroe; "there was a Governor-Generalship vacant—I demanded it."

"It was madness!"

"So said the premier—but he yielded; there was ruin in my refusal."

"Impossible!" said Julian.

"Yet true—as you shall hear from his own lips. You are the Governor-General of Japan, the hour that sees me Lady Cash."

“I, Governor-General!” exclaimed Julian.  
“I! by common accord, condemned to an eternally frivolous existence! I, whom they have contemned, raised at one step immeasurably above the heads of those who had toiled past me whilst I was loitering to gather flowers by the way—I, Governor-General of Japan!—but you refused, Calliroë?”

“No, Julian—I accepted; I was about to enclose your commission with my farewell—you came in person—I have seen you—it was better so—and now Heaven prosper you, Julian—for we part for ever!”

Julian had fallen on one knee and kissed the fair hand of his cousin—tears were in his eyes—thanks on his lips—and a little scorn in hers, for she heard no more of “Love in a Cottage.”

\* \* \* \*

As the Lady Caliroë retired to her boudoir, a letter was put into her hand; it ran,

DEAREST CALLIROE,

The political crisis I foreshadowed in my last is arrived. I have reason to know, that skilful as is Sir Jasper, our pilot, we cannot weather the storm—it is indeed time for every one to look out for a plank against the approaching shipwreck. Do not forget, Julian, or it may soon be too late—now or never, we must secure for him some office which does not change with the administration. Whilst thus urging you, dearest Calliroë, I hasten to correct an error, into which, on reference to the copy of my letter, I find that I had inadvertently fallen. I asked your interest to obtain the military secretaryship of Japan for Julian. This was an absurdity—it could not be conferred upon him ; it is the *under*-secretaryship that I meant.”

## CHAPTER VIII.

SIR Jasper, though elated with his success, still felt painfully anxious. The bridegroom was there, indeed, and he had the full authorisation of the father to negotiate the marriage in question, yet the father, without whose signature nothing could be done, was not arrived. The pressure of events was imminent, the time of the minister incalculably valuable, his occupations harassing and urgent, and yet he could not venture to leave the castle till he

has seen this alliance sealed, on which depended now the combinations of his policy. Even at the eleventh hour his rivals might outbid him. Old Cash, who did not hesitate to shock the decorum of the senate by sitting in his shirt-sleeves, was not the man to weigh even formalities the most compromising against solid interests.

“No tidings of him yet,” said the minister, reading rapidly the intelligence conveyed in his own cipher by the electric telegraph, of which a branch ran to the senator’s residence. “They are clamouring for me now at the private meeting of our friends. The funds are going down—once, twice, thrice, they have been down within these two hours. Here are four-and-twenty waverers absent through sickness—ah! and traitors too amongst them—watched to the levee of my rival. The owls fly out and hoot, the rats and vermin quit their holes—there are all the signs of a crumbling house, and of a falling ministry.”

Lord Loftly listened to the words which fell from his patron's lips with deferential and intense attention. He had followed where that patron had led—he had moved forward where he had pointed out the way—but, like the Israelites in the desert, had despaired and doubted in his heart, and cursed his stars, at times, that he had not worshipped other Gods. When, at length, there seemed nothing but ruin and a waste before him—like Moses, who miraculously drew the water from the rock—this man of inexhaustible expedients came to save him; snatching him from bankruptcy to place him again on the pinnacle of prosperity. The senator rejoiced, therefore, to see his leader wear a smile of confidence, and asked, more in wonderment than in doubt,

“But though the re-establishment of my influence and the magnificent but tardy accession of our party will give us majorities to-morrow, and the next week and the next, how shall we carry on the government beyond? Is



not the sense of the monarchies strong against our order? Is not our order weakened, and is not the impression abroad that its time is come?"

"And that impression is full of truth—its fate is sealed. No man can any more stem the flood of circumstance than re-ascend the stream of time; but the bold and skilful may float with its tide and steer happily down its rapids. I grant you that the rationalist party will be a wreck before another session, but yet you and I will be ministers."

The senator looked dubiously.

"Yes, farewell to the wreck of our estate; we steered it gallantly and sailed it well; but men like you and me are not made to perish with it. The spirit of the time has changed—we must move with the spirit of the time—we must head the moderate party."

"Our deadly enemies!"

"I shall have followers from our camp, and

find partisans in theirs. I will not even ask whether I may count on you."

"But how join them in the excitement of the measures they press us with so hard—The measures we have opposed so long and bitterly?"

"We do not join—we crush our enemies—we raise a banner loftier than their own, and, drawing after it their followers, leave the Moderate leaders hostless. With all those devoted to me—with all the party of old Cash to back me—we go down to the senate and hurl upon them, like a thunder-bolt, a proposition more popular than they ever dreamed of. What say you?"

"A bold and appalling step; but the master mind reveals itself, and I defer," replied the senator, rivetting his eyes with admiration on his chief.

"Yes, in truth, it will be to them appalling in the hour of anticipated triumph when we come upon them—sudden, resistless, unex-

pected—a political avalanche. Still, I wish this marriage were concluded—the contract signed. Where is our new ally—why does he tarry?” The minister looked again to his telegraph.

“A report spreads that the minister is ill. The mob are cheering the Moderate members.—No; it is the Moderate leader, who is ill and absent.”

“My friend, we must hasten this marriage, every hour is precious.”

“It is impossible to proceed till old Cash arrives.”

“Listen,” said the minister, earnestly, “this whole arrangement is so peculiar, that if events have justified a precipitation thus far novel and unusual, I cannot see why we should not anticipate the event by a few hours. The Lady Calliroë will listen to reason, supposing we further hasten the ceremony, and cause it to take place within a short time of his arrival.”

"But my daughter has not even seen her future husband."

"The acquaintance of a day, or of an hour—what matters? It is time for me to make them known to each other—suppose I introduce him to the bride—that we run through the contract, and fix the marriage for midnight."

"This is sharp work—brief notice to give up a darling child ; but after all it is for her incalculable advantage."

"To make the bankrupt's child the most powerful woman in the world."

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE BRIDE AND BRIDEGROOM.

EUSTATIUS was left alone with his affianced. When told by his father that he must marry, he prepared to obey implicitly and without comment. It was an agreeable surprise when he found that the wife provided for him was young, high-born, wealthy, and widely famed for her beauty. He had, indeed, seen the Lady Calliroë on one of the few occasions on which she had appeared in public, and—like all the world—often, in graceful portraits and the prints of boudoir books.

The Lady Calliroë had never seen Eustatius. When Sir Jasper was gone she had given one glance at his miniature, and had almost experienced a feeling of disappointment, when, enthusiastically bent on self-sacrifice, she found that he was so comely. This feeling was heightened when he stood before her, and that she was forced to acknowledge that his portrait had not done him justice.

“Our position is a strange one, Lady Calliroë” he said at length, “the sport, as we are of social and political exigencies, which roll remorselessly over our predilections and affections. How then shall I describe to you my delight when being deprived of all free will—when yielding blindly to my fate, I find a choice made for me exactly where I should have paused to admire and render homage, if I had ranged the wide world through.”

“Hush!” said the Lady Calliroë, “we are two puppets in the hands of those who play us off. We have each, no doubt, our part

assigned to us—but why weary each other with it ?”

The suitor looked annoyed for a moment, and then he answered :—

“ Something similar I must have said, if you had been like the old fairies in the nursery tale instead of resembling the imprisoned beauties whom gallant knights deliver. Yet why doubt truth when more probable than insincerity ? One glance at your mirror will prove that you are beautiful ; one glance into your eyes will prove them full of soul—the sound of your own voice—the reflection of your own person, must teach you better than the tongue of man, that you are formed to inspire love in his bosom. I do not for a moment dream that one tithe of that impression can be mutual ; but I am sure that I shall love you tenderly, and believe me, that a woman cannot be so loved and remain for ever indifferent.”

“ You have learned your lesson well,” said the Lady Calliroë, “ but let us rather strive

to be friends, since we are to be partners through life. They have chosen for you a wife very self-willed."

"What matter" replied Eustatius, with a smile, "when she finds a husband who will have no will but hers?"

"That is a consideration in the price of a wife, where a wife is purchased, for we have as much will in this matter as the thing bought and sold by the trader."

"If it be too distateful to you?" said Eustatius, who was growing embarrassed, "yet Sir Jasper said that you were not unwilling."

"I am resigned, as you must needs be in this bargain."

"Madam, the mode of this marriage is the curse of our position—yet in substance it will prove, I trust, the blessing of our lives—the glory and the pride at least of mine. You must consider that formerly, when Princes ruled, their children were disposed of as your hand has been to me. They were bought and



sold, but the price was provinces and kingdoms. The age of Princes is past away. We replace them, and this reminds me that I have an offering to make."

The bridegroom went to the door, and two of the Lady Calliroë's women entered with a casket of malachite and gold.

"These jewels are unworthy of you—but I believe there are few finer—all are historically curious. This emerald adorned the Sultan's turban; this pearl was pledged by Charles the Second to the States of Holland; this brilliant the Empress Catherine purchased by a title and pension; this gem belonged to Mary, Queen of Scots; for this ruby a pitched battle was fought, a province desolated."

The Lady Calliroë took them one by one, and cast them carelessly aside.

"This necklace, if you examine it minutely through your glass, contains on each stone, exquisitely graven views, of seven once royal

palaces; this is Sans Souci—this is Fontainebleau. My father purchased the domains with the necklace from their owner—they go together—they are part of my offering.”

The Lady Calliroë exhibited no surprise at the Imperial magnificence of these presents.

“Jewels and palaces! It is well; you are colosally rich, I know, but how inhabit more than one dwelling wear more than one of these suits at a time?”

“Yet these are things that the beautiful and high-born covet.”

“I loved jewels yesterday, but not to-day. When it suits man’s purpose he appeals to woman’s reason—suppresses the inspirations of a woman’s nature—he leaves out of consideration her hopes, her delicacy, her antipathies, her predilections—and then, when she has taken an irretrievable step into the path he wishes, he would make her the woman and the child again. These are the signs of wealth, and of power

which wealth purchases, but they are not power. I do not exactly know all that constitutes power; but votes in the National Parliaments—votes in the Federative Assembly, teeming populations and devoted clients are evidence of power, I know; and these, for my husband and myself, I prefer to gems and palaces. What is your offering of these?"

Eustatius felt cruelly embarrassed.

"You are wise and prudent as you are beautiful. I am an only son—I have nothing but the prospective inheritance of my father's wealth—its extent is great—I do not precisely know it—it would be difficult, they tell me, to compute. These jewels are the richest in the united monarchies—the other particulars of our fortune correspond."

"Enough," said the Lady Calliroë. "We are yet but two automatons, whom others move—a boy and a girl, who do as they are bid. You were instructed to see and compliment me—you have done so; I was told to receive

you—I have fulfilled my part. Now, take my assurance, that I will be to you a faithful wife, and allow me to retire.”

“And I will be a loving husband,” said the bridegroom, seizing, with a shew of eagerness, and carrying to his lips, her hand, which she made no hasty effort to withdraw, but which was cold as marble.

“Will you promise me that it will not rain at noon to-morrow?”

“Not rain! How can I promise you?”

“How can you promise then to love me?—the signs of the skies are easy to be read, compared with the mind or temperament of man or woman. No, if we are to be yoked together through our lives, do not let us begin with falsehood and deceit—we may come to that too soon. Adieu, till we meet again.”

And with this the Lady Calliope rose, and left the disconcerted Eustatius, saying to himself,

“This is a girl! What will she be when a great lady and a wife?”

## CHAPTER X.

## ADIEU TO GIRLHOOD.

THE Lady Calliroë stood in the centre of her boudoir, surrounded by her favourite women. The opened doors shewed through on either side a long suite of apartments, in which presses, chiffoniers, and caskets of carved wood, ivory, ebony, or tortoise-shell, were opened too and rifled of their contents—the treasures of a wealthy maiden's wardrobe.

She had dismissed, from her service, all her attendants who were weeping round her as she divided amongst them her trinkets and her

raiment, as these were piled into a heap at her feet. Here a Hindoo woman beat her breast, and uttered loud lamentations as she gathered up costly shawls and glittering trinkets—there her faithful Highland girl collected the gold coins, which she called the siller. A dark-eyed Florentine, appealing to the virgin, took nothing but a jewelled crucifix; and the Greek maid, Zoë, prostrated on the ground, disdaining all these gifts, declared, in the accents of her passionate grief, that she would not go away. All kissed the hands or garments of their mistress, and implored that she would not dismiss them, but their mistress was inexorable. She *would* be left alone—she was obeyed.

Even to Zoë she was almost harsh, though she kissed her on the forehead, and gave the weeping girl her dear gazelle, the only token the devoted islander would accept.

The Lady Calliroë then hastened to take a last look at her palfrey. She bade them take off his bridle, and loose him in the park. The

horse came up at her well-known voice—he neighed his recognition—but, in a moment, finding he was loose, he galloped off, describing circles round her, till at last, exulting in his freedom and his swiftness, he snuffed the breeze and sped away.

The Lady Calliroë watched him, until—lost amongst the old oak trees—his mane and tail were only seen at intervals, flashing in silver, above the fern, amidst which he disappeared, startling the deer in his impetuous career. She then called for her falcons, Timur and Attila. She ordered them to remove their hoods, unbind their jesses, and let them soar.

The hawks, no more faithful than the steed, flew away—one out of sight, and then the other followed in his track through the clear atmosphere, till both were hidden by the tall trees.

She returned to her boudoir to take a last look at her flowers, and at her birds. In bright and uniform, or blended hues of pur-

ple, azure, gold and scarlet, now mingled like the rainbow's tints, now varying with every movement and with each reflected beam, as they fluttered from flower to flower, or hung with vibrating wings suspended in the air, the captives attracted by the sun without, beat their gorgeous breasts against the crystal that imprisoned them.

The Lady Calliroë touched a spring, and the windows slid open. It was the impulse of the moment, for an instant's reflection taught her that she was wrong—but it was too late—she could not close the casement readily, and one by one her birds flew past her out, and she remained alone.



## CHAPTER XI.

## CHAPTER OF HISTORICO-POLITICAL ECONOMY.

**DREAD** of the wild communistic doctrines triumphant in the Democratic Union, had united by a common bond all in the Federative Monarchies, who had property to lose, or the hope of ever acquiring any.

The last prejudices of caste—the last vestiges of lingering nationalities were dispersed by the common danger, when the propagandist spirit of this society began to manifest itself, threat-

ening, through its restless energy, the existence of the old.

Recollections of a common origin and language no longer bound nations together. A Frenchman was no longer a Frenchman, an Englishman no longer an Englishman; but all merged into one of two great classes, into which the civilised world became divided. One consisted of those who had accumulated property, or who, though not possessing any, looked forward to its acquisition and could appreciate institutions which maintained the rights of individual possession, and of a large number still influenced by custom or timidity. The other comprised all who were content to forego the prospect of opulence—with the accompanying chance of misery—for the certainty of competence, and who preferred a humble equality, where none could overtop them, to the possibility of social pre-eminence. Thus the civilized world came to be separated into two great states, in each of which the

disjointed fragments of castes and nations were mingled and amalgamated into a mass—homogenous—though its original elements were still as distinguishable to the eye of investigation as the antediluvian remains of animals and vegetables assimilated by fossilization with the strata in which they are found embedded.

In the United Monarchies especially, forms and styles, remained, though changed in essence. National Chambers, Parliaments, and Diets existed still, but altered in constitution and dwindled down to local importance.

Lords, Counts, and Peers survived in name but not in substance; and the forms of hereditary monarchies were still preserved in the former subdivisions of the Federative Kingdoms, though royalty had really sunk into a mere state of beadledom.

These Federative Monarchies formed of so many elements of wealth, constituted naturally the most powerful of the three great states, into which (with the Bokarian despotism) the whole

world was divided. It was the most peaceable as well as the most powerful, and could only be roused by the determined aggression of the Democratic Union to defend itself in the sanguinary struggle which ensued between them.

In this struggle, as all the world knows, the wealth and organization of the Federative Monarchies triumphed, and the Union, humbled, weakened, and threatened in its very existence, was obliged for many years to refrain from further molestation.

At the commencement of this struggle the capitalists became classed into two grades of aristocracy, and wealth became the exact standard of representation and of power. All possessed of more than ten thousand pounds voted in one chamber; the fortunate owners of a million in another.

At first these major and minor capitalists formed one united body against the Democratic Union without, and their own penniless

fellow subjects within; but on the fortunate issue of the war, the great capitalists divided into two orders—the millionaires and the many-millioned; and by degrees found themselves in opposition with the minor capitalists, whom they attempted to keep down. These parties assumed the name of Rationalists and Moderates, and through their dissensions, the sons of toil, whose sympathies were in a great measure with the foreign Democratic Union, were again enabled to raise their heads, under the name of *Commonsense men*.

Rationalists and Moderates were equally opposed to the Common-sense men, in this respect, that they estimated the claims of that accumulated labour, called capital, so high above those of living labour as to render the rights of the one the wrongs of the other. Amongst themselves they differed on its influential proportions, and in the quarrel which ensued not unfrequently coquetted with their common adversaries.

For thirty years after the great struggle the

rationalists kept the ascendancy. The millionaires indeed might have succumbed to the numbers of their adversaries, but for the fact that every minor capitalist lived in the hope of becoming himself a millocrat, and that they passed a law limiting every public association to a hundred members. It thus happened that every great undertaking fell naturally into the hands of the rationalist millionaires, because, notwithstanding the aggregate wealth of the moderates, the limitation of number left them no chance of rivalry.

But this powerful body, like many others, not contented with present stability, sought to extend both the amount and duration of its power.

It chanced that a disease spread amongst all roots and breadstuffs, like that which banished the *solanum tuberosum*\* from use, in the middle of the last century. It went through different phases ; sometimes it increased—sometimes it

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\* Called also *murphy* or *potatoe* in the speeches and writings of that day.

diminished, and at others seemed vanishing to break out the next harvest with fresh violence.

Famine for a long time threatened humanity, till science discovered a means of neutralising the effects of the contagion by a peculiar preparation of the seed. This preparation required several seasons, and in the different stages of the disease, varying agents to destroy the pernicious principle; but the process by which these agents were employed, always the same, had been indirectly secured by patents to the principal millionaires.

It thus appeared inevitable that the dependence of society for the chief article of its food upon these potentates, must have eventually placed at their mercy all classes of their fellow citizens. This combination which Sir Jasper had devised, was long successful. The millocrats, like Pharaoh in the land of Egypt, hoarded up the seed corn, and all were obliged to purchase of them. So that being the absolute lords of the staff of life, they

would have been enabled to tax, the remainder of the people, without other limit than their ability to pay, if it had not happened that the wealth which flowed into the coffers of the millionaires on one side had always ebbed out at another. When the corn had been stored for several years, it always chanced that some one of the ever changing ingredients of disinfection had been bought up by some equally remorseless speculator, who levied on them a larger toll than they were levying on the people.

To retrieve such coincident mishaps the millionaires speculated more deeply ; but never in a new stage of the disease did they discover a modification of the remedy, but that they had been forestalled, and were obliged to purchase at ruinous prices the chief ingredient of their disinfecting process. They raised their prices ; but this both occasioned dangerous discontent and soon found its limit. They were forced to give vast credit, and their



irresponsible debtors failed, whilst their wealth was inexorably mulcted by their creditor.

Under these circumstances the star of the rationalist millocrats was waning fast, notwithstanding all the expedients of Sir Jasper. The moderates, backed by the people, hourly gained strength and clamoured for the abolition of the law which limited the numerical extent of association.

Meanwhile, however, a personage had sprung up, who had become in himself a power. No man could be more solicitous to hide—more skilful in concealing the amount of the money he had made, but yet it became known that he was the possessor of incalculable wealth, and at different intervals chance had revealed riches far exceeding the wildest speculations of the vulgar.

The extent of his fortune gave him accession to the body of the millionaires; but he in nowise identified himself with their order. Though without any ostensible effort on his part to

unite them, clients, partisans and imitators gathered round him, expressing their eagerness to vote as he voted, and following his example by remaining strictly neutral.

Both the Rationalists under Sir Jasper and the Moderates under Middleman Cautious had in vain used every effort to gain him over to their respective parties, till a period arrived when John Cash, who refused to express even the shadow of an opinion, obviously possessed the power of inclining the balance either way.

At length, as the reader has been shewn, Sir Jasper flattered himself that he had succeeded in attaching to his fortunes this man, who epitomised a whole host in his person.

Meanwhile the moderate leader indulges in a like belief. Let us take a peep into his camp.

Middleman Cautious is walking up and down a long room, at one end of which he pauses to whisper orders or make suggestions to a secretary whose pen travels over the paper

with marvellous rapidity, and then apparently reflecting as he moves along, he comes to converse in a subdued and earnest tone with a group of politicians to whom he is giving audience at the other end.

Middleman Cautious, is, in point of years, in the prime of life. His bald forehead is high and broad. His eye, wonderfully piercing, is a truthful index of his singular penetration, which an insatiable curiosity excites, and to which an inexhaustible patience ministers. Years back he would probably have been a rationalist notability if he could, but thrown by circumstances, into the moderate party, he became its leader, till at length, though aware of its comparative insignificance, he began, like Cæsar, to prefer playing the first part in a hamlet, to being second at Rome.

This party had, however, progressed from weakness and inferiority to equality and strength, and it was now rapidly assuming predominance. If its chief had never ventured

upon one combination for the future, or created one of the circumstances which favored its development, he had dissected and laid bare the combinations of his adversaries, and profited unerringly by every circumstance which arose. He had inspired his party with courage when it wanted heart, he had restrained its rashness when it grew impatient, till at last it became the fashion to reproach him with over prudence. The announcement, therefore, of a decisive and definite attack upon the rationalists produced an immense sensation, and it was in the midst of the excitement occasioned by this intelligence, on the eve of the approaching battle, that we have introduced him to the reader.

“Those who are not with us to-morrow, my lords, I shall consider against us. Let us understand each other,” said the Moderate leader, addressing himself to five individuals who tacitly allowed themselves to be represented

by one spokesman, and who were the waverers spoken of by Sir Jasper.

“Let us, as you say, briefly understand each other,” replied the man addressed; “our absence may be remarked—it is dangerous. That we are animated by liberal sympathies and personal friendliness of feeling is obvious by our being here, but we have a great stake in the country, Sir—we cannot compromise ourselves rashly, and without seeing our way clearly. It will be a toss up between you and Sir Jasper if you bring in that bill to-morrow, without the aid of Cash and his tail. They have never yet taken any side, and unless we have some more positive proof that they mean to join you, than your mere assurance that they will co-operate, we owe it to ourselves to step back into the rationalist ranks which, after all, have been for thirty years triumphant.”

“We are full of sympathy with the masses,” added one of the waverers, “but, as practical

men, we conceive that we can serve our country better in that party, unless its strength be shaken, and of this we must have some better security."

"You are patriotic men, I know—who feel it a duty to vote with the strongest," replied Middleman Cautious; "I have pledged myself to you, that John Cash has promised me his support. You are not satisfied with that promise; I now declare to you, always under seal of secrecy, that to me it is perfectly satisfactory. To-morrow will decide the matter. You wish to side with the strongest—his support will render me the strongest—reserve your votes, therefore, till his party has pronounced itself. If I be myself deceived, you will not then be compromised. Can I give you better security of my good faith?"

The deserters looked at each other, and consented with a common accord,

"It is then agreed, that directly the neutrals

have pronounced for us in the senate, you shew our colours, and vote with us."

"Agreed!" replied the spokesman. "It would have a better effect for us to be prepared with effective speeches the moment Cash has pronounced himself, so as not to follow at the tail of all his party. On that eventuality depends in fact our concurrence."

"We part on that understanding," said Middleman Cautious, shaking each man by the hand. "If old Cash does not come forward, you may have speeches ready to use the other way, if you choose it."

"It would, indeed, disarm suspicion," replied the spokesman, "and render our co-operation more valuable, on some more auspicious occasion. Good day;—success attend your plans."

"God speed you, my lords," and the waverers, after each one had grasped his hand convulsively, retired.

"Is it then true that you really depend upon

Cash?" exclaimed, in utter dismay, Dick Tystem, the Editor of the *Moderate Organ*, and chief confident of the Partisan leader.

"I *do* depend upon him—I *do* trust implicitly to his co-operation in the approaching struggle," replied Middleman Cautious. "We might perhaps have conquered without him, but time was fighting our battles, and I would never have risked the strife or have precipitated this decisive blow without his aid. John Cash is the man of the age—his aid is worth that of a hundred such auxiliaries as the mob orator, Invective Rabid, who has just left us, or of those vacillating traitors. Political investigation led me to the suspicion, years ago, that John Cash had possessed himself mysteriously of the mainsprings of all social change, and I have made John Cash the object of my unceasing study. You know him to be the very god of wealth—but perhaps you did not suspect that he is what I have discovered him to be—a Genius; a man whom it is impossi-



ble to cajole, to intimidate, to touch, to tempt, or to win over, and who was moving on with rapid, though unpretentious strides, to the absolute dominion of the State. But every man has a heel previous to the arrow.

This vulnerable point I discovered in tracing his extraordinary influence to its occult source. John Cash has alone possessed the art of arresting the vegetable pestilence. It is he who, under innumerable forms, has drained from the *Millionaries* what they extorted from the people, but I have found the talisman of his obedience—John Cash, with all his wealth, and all his power, is at this hour as completely under my controul, as the slave of the lamp at the disposal of Aladdin. This fact has indeed determined me to change the Fabian tactics of my party for a sudden and decisive onslaught. To-morrow I bring in my bill for the abolition of restricted association; to-morrow I shall triumph through the aid of this Prince of Gold. He must obey me; he

is but a puppet of which I hold the strings in my hand—and what a puppet!—for, so to say, he has the world in his.”

The reader will thus perceive, that, at the same hour, the leaders of the two chief parties exulted on confident conviction of the fidelity of their ally. Which was he deceiving?

## CHAPTER XII.

## A RISING MAN IN 1906.

Lord Lofty had in person proceeded to the next station to receive the guest he was so anxiously expecting, but in vain he passed in review the passengers in the hope of piercing the incognito of the illustrious stranger.

Train after train had come up, when he was telegraphed back to the castle, by the intelligence that old Cash, eluding his vigilance and civilities, had arrived before him.

Old Cash had come by a third class train, and he had started for the castle on foot.

What cared he how he travelled?—for that railway really belonged to him, or at least it was mortgaged to him by one of those companies of *millorats* who had appropriated steam-boats and railways and every means of conveyance throughout the Federative Monarchies.

John Cash was at first refused admittance, but his name acted like an “open sesame.” Doors were flung wide with ceremonious eagerness—giants in livery bowed low and humbly before the little man—and Hugh Fitz-Stephen Upland, the seneschal was down upon him with all the celerity of a spaniel rushing to lick its master’s feet.

Old Cash, as he called himself, was sixty years of age, and short of stature. Nothing could be more repulsive, or underbred, than his appearance. His forehead was low—his rheumy eyes of a greenish grey—his features coarse and fleshy, and his skin oily in its Esquimaux-like thickness. His broad stunted figure looked still more unshapely beneath a heap of ill-

fashioned clothes, and his voice was singularly harsh and unpleasing.

This unprepossessing individual did not even speak any language distinctly. His conversation was at best a singular medley of the idiom, accent and words of many tongues, and of the phraseology of many classes. He had learned to sign his name, but no one had ever seen him write further—and, indeed, it was still doubtful whether he could read at all.

These deficiencies, had long induced the belief that he was both wanting in capacity and ignorant; but the world was as much mistaken in this opinion as the clowns who sneer at some intelligent traveller who cannot speak with fluency their village jargon.

Though a physiognomist might have accounted his expression common-place and stolid, a phrenologist would have contemplated with a very different eye the vast development of brain, none the less evidenced by the form and proportions of his capacious skull, because all

further index of intellect was outwardly denied.

Though Cash could neither read nor write, he possessed a degree and bent of genius which rendered these arts useless to him. He could dispense with reading and writing in the same manner that he managed his extraordinary speculations, without confidant or *locum tenens*—through his prodigious memory and the wonderful clearness of his head for figures and combinations. For years he had been seen in marts and on exchanges, transacting the most complicated business entirely by word of mouth, and without reference to any other memoranda than such as were furnished by that faithful monitor.

It is as a substitute for memory that three parts of the utility of numbers and of letters exists, and he was enabled to dispense with their use through the singular vigour of his retentive faculties.

As he had no trust in notes or books, every

fact or figure that he thought worth remembering was engraven on his recollection, so that far from being ignorant he was possessed of an astonishing amount of that kind of miscellaneous knowledge which is commonly termed "information."

He would not trouble himself to retain anything disconnected with the present state of society, whether science, history, or art, because he sought only to know mankind as it was, and this he had gathered as much as possible from extensive travel and unwearied observation, making others read to him where this had failed to enlighten him.

John Cash, though he could neither read nor write—though he had never heard of the siege of Troy, and was profoundly ignorant of the planetary system, had in fact become the most learned man of his time; that is to say, if learning simply imply amount of knowledge.

No man living was so deeply versed in the

statistics of the world—of its surface and inhabitants, and of the classes and races into which these were divided.

No man was as completely master of its political and financial secrets, and of the strength, spirit and condition of the governing and the governed.

Supposed to be a native of the Bokarian despotism, though his origin was avowedly obscure, he had risen so gradually and unobtrusively that it became difficult to trace back his career to the lowest step from which he had ascended.

Some remembered this man—at whose bidding the funds now rose and fell, and now notoriously influenced peace and war—always as a capitalist; others, whose memory stretched beyond, recognised in him a mere humble speculator, who was formerly whispered to be richer than he appeared; whilst a few recalled the pedling trader in the mighty lord of millions, who was every day discovered to be



the owner of fresh and unsuspected sources of wealth, and whose invisible agents seemed like a net-work to overspread the globe.

Old Cash entirely eschewed the dignified magnificence of his fellow millionaires, amongst whom he had never yet chosen to take his seat ; but his affected humility—besides rendering him popular—was really full of pride.

As far as he ever allowed his feelings to influence his actions, which was until the point were they interfered with his interests, there lurked a feeling of profound resentment against the class of which he had virtually become a member. He had not forgotten the trials of his early and humble life, and now that his equality was incontestible, and his superiority widely recognised, he took pleasure in mortifying those who were once his betters, by affecting all the coarseness of those from whom he had sprung.

He loved to scandalize the ceremonious aristocracy of the day, by the incongruities of his

costume or behaviour; and he found it sweet to sin, by rude vulgarity of phrase, against the proprieties of the drawing-room, which dared not banish him from its precincts, just as he took delight in defiling with the mud of his plebeian highlows the velvet carpets which he trampled.

Old Cash had started in life as an itinerant vendor of rhubarb, roots, and sponges. This business he abandoned for a stationary trade in marine stores, or in other words, as a dealer in rags, bones, and bottles. This shop was in its turn abandoned for a less ostensible mode of speculation, and from this period his fortunes rose in a manner inexplicable to the world at large.

John Cash in reality united all the boldness of Ouvrard with more than the cautious hardihood and good luck of Rothchild. No scheme was ever framed so daring and ingenious that he could not have bettered it; but if he knew how to convert a few thousand pounds into millions he knew how to secure and

handle millions without the unnecessary loss or risk of an infinitesimal fraction of their value.

The celebrated Poyais scheme held somewhere betwixt 1820 and 1830 an historical place between the Mississippi and South Sea bubbles of a preceding century, and the railway mania of 1846.

A knot of speculators devised the ingenious expedient of hoaxing, with accounts of an imaginary nation and territory, a royal personage—of course it was a Bourbon—a Prime Minister of France, and a whole public, which need not be mentioned as the British. They caused maps to be engraven, and books of travel to be written by authors who contradicted each other in a few details, to agree in main particulars, respecting an El Dorado, whose primitive inhabitants longed only for some foreign people, to share with them their riches—for a constitutional sovereign to rule over them—for a colony of officials to fill their vacant offices – and for a loan. Nobody

could contradict these writers;—no one else had ever been there, for the best of reasons. Each dupe was served to his taste. The Bourbons furnished a sovereign in the person of Don Francisco de Paulo ; France found commanders-in-chief and aides-de-camp, and John Bull was gratified by permission to supply the loan.

When all was arranged to the general satisfaction, unluckily no one could discover this populous country, which was at length conjectured to be a facetious allusion, on the part of the originators of the loan and constitution, to a wide district of that name, inhabited by bull frogs and alligators, and covered in the day season with two feet of water.

John Cash had carried out, unaided, a scheme quite as ingenious, and of which, furthermore, he only secured the profits, whilst keeping personally out of sight and obloquy. He was already a capitalist when he judged it advisable to make large purchases of diamonds. Once having come to this determination,

"nothing," he argued, " would be fairer than to buy them at the lowest price." From time immemorial bears on the Stock Exchange had resorted, for the purpose of lowering the funds, to every species of report which might cause their prices to decline.

John Cash did not speak evil of the intent or conduct of ministers and governments, nor alarm the public confidence by the insidious announcement of imaginary mishaps; he only slandered brilliants, and spread the rumour that they were worthless common stones.

A learned professor lectured publicly upon the diamond, " long known," he said, " as pure carbon, and which scientific men had now discovered the means of crystalising in any quantity, at an expense little exceeding its weight in charcoal. A patent," added the learned Doctor, "is being taken out for the manufacture of vases, vessels, and window-panes of this once precious and most durable material ; and, indeed, I am authorised to state that a company will shortly

open extensive premises, where orders will be received and duly attended to. Price, as a matter of science, is immaterial; but it is gratifying for me to be able to inform my hearers, that the cost of a diamond, the size of a brickbat will not more than four times exceed it in value. The mere manufacture of the material was the first step—the second, and most important, has been its fusion into useful forms, and this object is nearly attained. I will, however, herewith submit a few specimens for your inspection,” and so saying, the lecturer took handfuls of brilliants from a canvas bag beside him, and distributed them amongst the spectators. “These are, as it were, but a sort of diamond gravel—the fruit of our first crude attempts, but though small, they are, as you will perceive, of fine water. The contents of this bag, with which we may now afford to scatter our garden footpaths, would itself have been worth a hundred thousand pounds at the previous market price. You need not trouble

yourselves to return them, gentlemen, they are valueless now." Men of science and jewellers examined the stones with doubt or incredulity—they were found to be perfect and real diamonds, and his auditory, themselves convinced, carried about conviction with the specimens of the lecturer.

Far and wide spread the report—it was printed, it was written, it was borne by word of mouth, it was authenticated, and all over the united monarchies the possessors of brilliants hurried with them for sale, still glad to get something above the value of the settings. In every town and district some old sober-sided purchaser of reversions and contingencies was found, still willing to buy them for a trifle. These individuals were the agents of old Cash, who, by presenting the public with one bag of brilliants, was enabled to secure all the finest in the world for a mere song.

Let us now imagine a man of such speculative boldness and unscrupulous ingenuity, sud-

denly possessed of a secret which made him Lord of the bread of nations, but which was so dangerous, from its very magnitude, that to another it might have proved ruinous and fatal. The community, in fact, was so much more powerful than the individual, that when its aggregate interests came in competition with his, undoubtedly he would have been sacrificed, through some law framed to meet the occasion. Now, his avidity would not allow him to risk the forfeiture of any part of the prospective advantages to be derived from his secret, and his foresight taught him the safest means of enjoying it. He made one portion of society—its powerful millocrats without their suspecting it—his accomplice against the remainder, and worked out his own designs by interesting their cupidity.

John Cash was possessed of the true secret how to stay the vegetable contagion. Sulphur, which was then supposed to be a pure body, just as water was formerly held to be a primitive element,



really contained a principle which was the true antidote to the germinating poison.

Sulphur could furthermore be so prepared that this principle acquired affinity for any given substance, with which it then became necessary to combine it to draw forth its disinfecting virtues.

Though this material had been long used so extensively in arts and manufactures before a direct and simple mode had been discovered of procuring an acid more powerful than that which it forms by combination with oxygen, it had no longer any commercial value at the period to which allusion is made, excepting as a specific for the cure of mange in dogs.

The only mine in which it still abounded, was consequently almost abandoned, and the first step of John Cash was to become its purchaser.

He next compounded a recipe of many ingredients, in which he included sulphur and the peculiar material with which its anti-

contagious principle had been prepared to combine. These were introduced, (after the fashion of the beef added "to the stone soup," which the hungry traveller taught his stingy hostess how to make) into a prescription which recalled the Rosicrucian nostrums, by which, alike in the dark ages, the falconer restored health to his hawk, or the leech administered an emetic to his patient, and which might consist of such ingredients as the following:

"The pinions of a bat's wing calcined—two heads of dandelion, gathered on the second night of the full moon—a raisin, touched by the finger of a dead man, buried during a thunder-storm, and dug up on the stroke of midnight—the first egg of a bittern—the eye of a newt and down from the breast of an owlet, pounded together—three drops of blood from the tip of the tail of a black cat, without a single white hair, in a spoonful of the milk of a sow, who had devoured her own farrow—the roasted liver of a fox—a sprig of mistletoe—

the tail of a snake—the gall of a badger, and four grains of *ipecacuanha*.”

A recipe, compounded in this spirit, together with a process of wholly imaginary utility, he caused to be offered to the ruling capitalists. They tried it—they experimented on it—they grew keenly sensible to the importance of a discovery which made them masters of every man's bread, and whilst bargaining with the negotiator, he died suddenly, and they remained possessed of his supposed secret. They patented and kept concealed the process of this new discovery—they combined their wealth, as usual—they laid up stores of corn, and flattered themselves that they had found a means of securing their dominion alike over the labouring masses, and the petty capitalists jealous of their power.

At first these hopes were realised, but, in the course of time, the changes in the vegetable disease rendered it periodically imperative to add some fresh ingredient to their dis-

infecting process to render its virtue efficacious. One season it was naphtha; a second, arsenic; a third, the juices of the poppy. Now, it always happened, that notwithstanding all the precautions taken by the millocrats to buy up simultaneously the material required, that, in some unaccountable manner, its newly acquired value had got wind, and that they had been forestalled by speculators, who, possessing themselves of this ingredient, raised their prices in proportion to those which, in time-bargains, was set on corn and breadstuffs.

The truth was, that old Cash, whilst never raising the price of sulphur, prepared it periodically so as only to combine with some new material, of which he had anticipated the wholesale purchase, and which he sold at his own price—not only mulcting the great speculators of their gains, but luring them to their ruin. Thus, whilst leaving the *millionaires* to incur all the odium, Cash had been

gathering in the prodigious harvest they thought to reap—weakening their authority, drawing them into his power, and collecting round him clients and a party. Though endeavouring, by every means in his power, to retire from public notice, rumours of his amazing wealth got spread abroad; he was pressed by the *millionaries* themselves to take his seat amongst them, and at length both the millocrats, the minor capitalists, and the people, conceived so great an esteem for one who possessed the merit of being *so very rich*, that they, one and all, united to vote him a testimonial, which it was deemed would be most appropriate in money, and which was subscribed to the amount of a hundred thousand pounds. Such was the man who, though not a tithe of his means, views, and ambition, were divined, had still risen to such importance, that he was known to hold the balance of parties.

As the ceremonious senator, and the

inaccessible premier came forward to receive him, with a malicious affectation of respect, he returned the salutations of the obsequious lacqueys, who offered to take his hat and umbrella, addressing them as *Sir*, and assuming the awkwardness as he had donned the garb of one of the people.

"Welcome to Upland Castle," said the senator; "I missed the pleasure of receiving you at the station."

"You came by the Branch Upland line?" asked the minister.

"I did—by the last mixed train."

"How could I have missed you! I examined every passenger!"

"The passengers alight on different platforms; I came by the third class train."

"And you walked alone to the castle!"

"Not alone—I picked up three companions—two ratcatchers, and a sow gelder—we came together."

The grooms of the chambers bit their lips—

the lacqueys were on the broad grin, though the seneschal frowned on them with all the severity of that De Bracy, who was dying in his war-harness beneath a tree upon the canvass on which a few streaks of paint pictured the field of Flodden in the distance.

Lord Lofty, who felt unspeakably annoyed, hastened to conduct his guest into further privacy, pitying and vexed at the uncouthness of his new ally, which he little thought to be ostentatiously paraded.

It was the pride of John Cash to make the old *millocrats* blush at the man with whom they were obliged to fraternise, or on whom they were base enough to fawn.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE GALVANIST.

IN the ruined chamber of a decayed tenement an old man shivered over the burnt out ashes which had grown cold and white upon the hearth. The mouldy paper hung in shreds from the wall, and the wind whistling through the broken window panes disturbed the fitful flame of an expiring lamp. There was no furniture in this room, except two wooden settles, a table and some shelves; but though crowded with miscellaneous articles, their dilapidated condition and the disorder in



which they were heaped together gave it an aspect more cheerless than absolute vacuity. Books, minerals, jars, crucibles, and various portions of the apparatus used in chemistry and galvanism were scattered about or piled together, torn, broken, cracked, or mouldering on the cobwebbed shelves, or in the dusty corners. The room beyond, into which the rain habitually poured through the inhospitable roof, held nothing within its damp, bare walls but two pallets in a corner, a few cooking utensils, and writing implements upon a barrel reversed, which served instead of table. Everything in this habitation denoted poverty and decay; and the aged man who sought impossible warmth from the cold embers appeared as complete a wreck as everything surrounding him. His frame was bowed and broken; his hair and beard of snowy whiteness; his cheek hollow; and his eyes bleary. His bony hands appeared almost transparent as he stretched them tremulously out with the palsied motion

of extreme senility, and his voice had dwindled to a cracked and feeble treble.

The whole scene was more sombre even than those dark pictures of Rembrandt which frown in tints of bistre and of sepia, because here imbecility with its lack lustre eye appeared allied to old age.

Suddenly there approached light footsteps, and a female figure stood before him—frail but so fairy-like that it seemed typical of youthful grace in contrast to his decrepitude.

“Oh! Tempest, Tempest!” muttered the old man querulously, “even you abandon me—come, Tempest, blow the fire; I am very cold—what! isn’t it Tempest! Ah, it is you, Dame Slowman. Bad times—bad times! How is your rheumatism, neighbour Slowman?”

“Are you suffering?” inquired the young girl advancing a step that he might discover his error; but he looked her full in the face and continued.

“Ah, Dame Slowman, it is kind of you—

you have brought me a little tea. I have got a teapot there too," added the old man, and feeling for one embedded in the ashes, he fumbled at its broken lid; "but there is no tea in it! no tea—no tea! and no money to buy more; though, poor mad old soul, I might have all the gold in the world if I choose it. I—I am the man of the age, Dame Slowman; but I wish you had brought me a little warm gruel. We have fasted a good deal lately;—it is cold of nights, and the fire *does not* burn brightly."

"Have you no food?" asked the young girl.

"No food, and few teeth," said the old man, rather soliloquising than in answer to her question, and then he continued garrulously, "He is a good lad though, Dame Slowman; but he grows weak through scanty fare and watching. He has eaten but little these three days, and not much for weeks before; but do not say that I told you so. The fact is he could get little to do; and if we did not pay up the

rent they would commit me to the Union; for we have no sufficient means of livelihood, and I am sick and silly; and if I were to plead that I have not long to live, they would pack me off by the next pauper train; for who, they say, is to bury me? And then Tempest sold his cloak to purchase stuff to feed the galvanic current, so that I am cold at nights, for he does not cover my feet with it now. If you leave me faint, and cold, and hungry, you shall never have my secret, Tempest—you are too weak and ungrateful. I will never teach you to humble the great ones of the earth; but they will rouse the wolf in your heart at last; and I think you are almost ready to put the knife to their throats now?"

And so the old man continued to mutter on, whilst the blood of the young girl began to curdle, for at that moment a gleam of the expiring lamp fell steadily athwart a glass vessel on the chimney piece, exposing its transparent contents—a human hand suspended in

some liquid, and which seemed to tremble in the flickering flame which glared on its cadaverous whiteness. A few minutes before, a feeling of profound pity had filled her breast, at the sad spectacle of misery and drivelling idiotcy before her, rendered the more melancholy by the morbid illusion of power and importance in which the aged schemer and his young companion seemed to indulge alike. But as it now struck her that this mania might have merged into ferocious insanity, a cold shiver came over her, and she was about to retire, when the latch of the outer door moved, and she mechanically took refuge in the corner, remaining unnoticed, alike by the old dotard and the new comer.

The personage who entered was the same who has been introduced to the reader in the chapter which brought Julian Beauvoir and Eustatius Cash to Upland Castle.

His aspect was so peculiar, that he could

not readily be forgotten, and seen even amid thousands, it arrested the attention and impressed the beholder at once with the conviction that there was something strange about his character or history.

It required to observe him minutely before you could determine whether he were young or middle aged.

The deep lines of thought, the sunken eyes, and the full voice, might indicate forty, whilst his figure, the elasticity of his tread, the profusion of his hair, and other signs of juvenility, scarcely denoted twenty summers.

His features were noble, his brow was high and ample, his eye was full of intellect, his frame proportioned for agility and vigour—but his cheeks were hollow, his countenance emaciated, his complexion sallow, and his limbs fleshless.

Privation had evidently preyed upon his man-like vigour, and there was a dreamy expression about his eyes, sometimes awakening

into haggard restlessness, at others, flashing into fitful brightness, which led you to doubt whether that intellect, outwardly evidenced by so many signs, was not neutralised by insanity.

Perhaps, rather, his expression was that of the opium eater, when the re-action of the fatal stimulant in which he indulges, leaves mind and nerves unstrung, and in truth he was addicted to a terrible kind of stimulant, which was not only preying upon his youth, but had worn down to the last faint spark, the mind and vitality of his companion.

“Ah, Dame Slowman, there is nothing like a bit of cheerful fire,” said the old man, looking wistfully into the face of the youth, who, without answering him, seized his hand, and, with the other, disengaged the magnetic fluid.

Flashes of flame, like that of the aurora borealis, broke from his body, and shot living from his eyes. During the expulsion of this ethereal fluid by one more subtle still, his features, glowing in their self-emitted

light, wore an expression of inconceivable agony. But this was only momentary—for, in an instant, the young man and the grey-beard were enveloped alike by the magnetic current, and filled with the intensity of life which it imparted. Of this discovery, men dreamed in the days of Lavoisier—of this discovery, half a century back, the animal magnetists were the impostors and the prophets—having been then presentient of its undefined existence, just as before the discovery of America, by Columbus, land was conceived to be beyond the main, though the billows of the Atlantic were supposed to wash the shores of Cathay.

The effect of this magnetic current was startling. The old dotard sprang to his feet, the youth awakened as if from stupefaction, and they stood forth like gods of the Greek mythology—one the primeval Saturn, with all the wisdom gathered through all time in every furrow of his brow, and on his lips the bitterness of him pre-doomed to be dethroned



by his own offspring; the other, Latona's son when full of youth and thought, and daring, he drew his radiant arrows to the head to pierce the Python.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## THE MESMERIC STATE.

THE young girl, spectatress of this transformation, was equally affected by the strange influence which had produced it.

She, too, felt that she stood within its mysterious cycle, as a novel and undefinable sensation stole over her, keeping her spell-bound to the spot, without power of speech or motion, but at the same time endowing her with an unaccountable insight into the very minds of the old man and his companion.

Every feeling and every recollection, as each arose, and became interwoven and fashioned into thought, appeared distinct to this new sense of mental and psychological clairvoyance with which she suddenly found herself gifted, as the external aspect and motions of their bodies to her corporeal eye. Of this faculty were possessed in a far higher degree, the young man and the greybeard, who stood in the very focus of the magnetic disk, which, revealing its form and intensity by a glow of light, had caught her figure only in the pale refulgence of its outermost circumference.

They conversed without words as without power of concealment or deception, but at the same time—so absorbed in this inter-communion—that they had no perception that their hearts were laid bare, like an open book, to the scrutiny of a witness. This singular interchange of thought, which did not reveal itself by translation into language, was nevertheless

distinctly intelligible to these three personages, and might in substance have been rendered into words as follows, though—comprising, as it did, sweeping recollections of the past, and yet being expressed without resort to the slow process of interpretation—it exhibited simultaneously and vividly, whole passages, which the pen can only tediously impart.

“ You are come back, Tempest,” thought the old man, “ heart-sick, world-weary, and almost disposed to condemn and hate with me; but pride and obstinacy will not let you yield. You have felt that you were an intellectual giant, inheritor of my knowledge, who have journeyed to the brink of discoveries the most startling which genius and research have ever revealed to man. Your heart has dilated in self-consciousness of the magnitude of your mission and the purity of your intent; and thus you have come in contact with a race—pigmy in heart, and soul, and mind. You who know the long and terrible years of self-

denial—of agony and of exhaustion, by which I have purchased knowledge—you who have had—not faith to believe—but penetration to discern my truth, and courage to follow in my track—you whose expansive heart pants to devote and utilise these gifts and acquisitions to the happiness of your kind—you have seen me pass through life scorned as the visionary—shut in the maniac's cell, or regarded with scornful pity as the driveller and the pauper.

“I—I, who have exhausted a mind and body more capacious in its grasp and its endurance than the bodies and the minds of half a score of men—I, who, when the worn out principle of vitality and thought is declining, still concentrate their energies, and to the last live for a few hours an intellectual life at the expense of idiocy and moral torpor, the remainder of the day!

“I, who have been despised, oppressed, and trampled into obscurity—the Archimedes who could not speak the barbaric soldier's tongue—

the Columbus, novice in the pedant's formula—the Newton, ignorant of some common-place—I have been therefore condemned to live in penury, contempt, and fear; and to die unappreciated and unknown upon the bourne of mighty secrets; whilst others with stolen fragments of my mind have moved society to its foundations.

“I, whose long life is drawing to a close, and you who have seen into its past and borne witness to its present, how stands our reckoning with humanity?

“It is but a few days since that, wan with watching our experiment, and faint through feeding it with the food that should have fed your body, you were called away to waste your eloquence on the steward of our landlord. We owed him nothing—our rent was paid—but he told you that his master, like the other lords of the earth, had made a rule that they would not shelter those who could not prove direct and ample means of livelihood for

the living or of burial for the dead. You gained—not from the master but from the servant—a little respite, nothing further.

“It is but a few days since that you went to seek employment of the castle librarian—did not this man, pampered into drowsy plethora by indulgence, covetous of your services, yet envious of your acquirements—did he not, humble you by the array of his diplomas against the irregularity of your studies—did he not leave you to be turned repeatedly away on account of the sordidness of your attire, and then reproach you with dissolute idleness in not earning more speedily that bread which you *had* earned, and for which you were famishing in heart, in body, and in mind. In heart because that delay was want to me; in body because it was hunger to yourself; in mind, because the fruit of long vigils and irrecoverable time was being wasted from want of oil to feed the lamp of experiment, thus trimmed so assiduously and long in vain.

"All this was bitter, when you knew that your wan cheek was pale with superhuman effort—when you knew that day by day in your privation you were rejecting certain opulence and power to struggle for the problematic glory of being a benefactor to your kind—when you knew that the very cloak, whose absence discovered the thread-bare poverty of your garments, had been sold in your necessity, and that out of its divided price, half having been devoted to my malady, you had defrauded the hunger of your body to assuage a mental thirst; that, being without bread, you chose rather to purchase what was requisite to solve a chemical problem—and that, on your way to make this purchase, an impulse of humanity made you devote this little, an inestimable all to you, to relieve the misery of a stranger.

Yet these, you argued, are but menials, whom servility has debased; to-day you came in contact with their masters. Your art had taught you that one thing only could prolong



my life. This fact, self-confident ignorance not only called in question, but the great and wealthy master, surrounded by all the luxuries that affluence can give, denied your boon deliberately.

These are the rich, and the servants of the rich. What are the poor?—are not their words even now ringing in your ear, as they jeered at your mud-bespattered garb? No! believe me, and you are disposed to share in my conviction at this hour—mankind, in the mass, deserves its ignorance and its misery. There may be, indeed, individual merits, and to these exceptional enjoyments may be given, but under pain of forfeiture, if extending them to the undeserving herd in violation of that eternal law which restricts them to the exception.

“Never till now,” replied the youth, “have emotions so contending racked my bosom, for at this moment I doubt not only of others, but of myself. I have recognised the extent

of your intellectual power, none the less comprehensive because in everything incomplete—none the less great because resembling the imperfect ingenuity of the mechanist, whose constructions—wonderfully devised in every part—are wanting in a single screw. I have fathomed the magnitude and profundity of that Promethian genius which might have contrived the human frame, and have gathered from the elements the principle of life to animate it, forgetting after all an orifice to the lungs.

I have not judged with the vulgar, for whom a gulph divides failure from success even when trenching on it within a hair's breadth—for whom these creations, wanting completion, would be a mere mass of iron or of matter confused and wasted. I, therefore, have listened to you always with wonder, always with profound curiosity, yet never with thorough confidence or unlimited conviction.

I knew that if in some things gifted beyond

other men, you were in some deficient below the average of your kind.

I knew that in your hate of man you were not constant ; I knew that in the vindictiveness cherished through years, you wavered and you doubted, whilst I obeyed the one unchanging impulse—the voice which never faltering or wearying, inspired me with the longing to benefit humanity, and to redeem rather than avenge the crime of those who had sinned against it.

You prepared me for the reception of your mighty secret, in the belief that time would change this feeling—you offer me the means of power on condition that I employ it to humble and confound, but not to save ; you are ready to put into my hands the torch, so that I consent to use it not to enlighten but to destroy ; and, in the hope of that change in my sentiments, you have withheld it till the last faint flame is flickering in the lamp of life. And I *am* changed yet not as you

could wish me; for if my opinion of mankind is shaken I have lost all confidence in myself."

"Ay," replied the old man, "first indulgent ignorance; now, knowledge and disgust; next hatred of your kind—the true progression. You deified your own heart in your secret thoughts, and created that of your whole race in its image. Reality has tried it. You have found it wanting.

"Hear me, Tempest! Long since persuaded that the knowledge which penetrates the arcana of the universe, compassing its secrets, can never be the fruit of one single life, or of one unaided intellect, I looked amongst my fellows for a disciple who should have length of years before him beyond mine, and qualities of heart and brain which I was not possessed of.

"It was you whom I selected out of thousands whose dispositions I had read. I remember well how, wearied with the search, I was seeking shelter from a storm, when your

infantine daring attracted my attention. The blackness of the clouds had turned the day to night; and yet the earth was radiant with the lightning. It struck the oak before us charring and shivering its trunk. Your young companions trembled and wept with terror; but you stood boldly forth, looking upon the electric flashes like a young eaglet peering into the sun. When they shrieked "It will destroy us!" you replied "I stand between it and you;"—when they said "Do not look at it," you answered "I must see whence it comes and whither it goes."

"But it will blind you!"

"Not before I have seen."

"It will kill you!"

"Not before I know." It took not long for me to discover that I had lighted on the one amongst millions whom I sought. You were a poor neglected child, without even a name. I called you Tempest in memory of that day. Since then we have traversed strange

lands together, and wandered over paths of science no less strange and dreary. In you I found a thirst of knowledge and organisation of intellect fitting you to follow my most subtle abstractions together with a daring and endurance in which even I was wanting.

Our life together was one of terrible adventure, intensity, and pain. The taper removed from common air into an atmosphere of oxygen, which rapidly devours it, is not submitted to an agency more rapidly consuming. In mastering the laws which govern the vital principle, have not our researches led us to the bed of death with its delirious horrors—to the charnel house with its disgusts—to the experience of every kind of horror which can rack the mind—of every agony that can wring the body?

“In you indeed I always recognised a spiritless comprehensive, though more complete, and bold, and practical, than mine; in fact, more human, and as such I had hoped that it

would prove the conducting link betwixt me and those whom I would wither—those to whom I came the prophet and high priest of science; but who baffled me by vulgar fraud and repulsed me with their base contumely. My nature has indeed only a partial development; but yours is that of man in the full completion of all his attributes, with every sense of mind and body—with every propensity and passion in all the prominent proportions of the antique Hercules. As there is amplitude of brain, so was there vast capacity of heart alike to love or hate; and it was natural that the love of man should fill it enthusiastically, till mankind became known to you as it is to me. Then I believed, and still believe, that cynical disdain will succeed to your philanthropy. But death is overtaking me before you have acquired that fatal knowledge; for if your precocious youth has become initiated into things unrevealed to the most learned, in others you are ignorant as a child. Step

by step I have led you by the hand along the paths of every human science; but time has failed me, and torn me from your side midway.

“Thus we have plunged together, age by age, deep into the lore of history, gathering from its contradictory falsehoods truth; but—though the past is familiar to you—though none is more profoundly versed in the records of by-gone generations down to the last half century—you know nothing of the present; it is a chapter I had once hoped we should peruse together, but which you have never opened.

The last and most important study to which I thought to urge you, was that of man, read in the book of actual intercourse, and when you had ran through some of its bitter pages, I would have trusted you with power—content that I should be avenged. But it is not so, and I must die, either allowing my spirit to be extinguished like a meteor, which, traversing the air innocuously, goes out with



unimparted flame, strewing with its detritus the earth it might have scorched—or else I must trust it into hands, from which some worldly, cunning, will entice it, and to one whose heart will betray himself and me!

“Yet why should I despair?—your profound faith in yourself is shaken, and you are not one to remain midway. You know that my hours are numbered—science might for a brief space have prolonged them, had selfish arrogance allowed. You know that we have reached that bourne, which, overstepped, will leave, dividing us, the difference betwixt life and death, and you are startled at yourself to find so many mixed and contradictory sensations qualifying your regret on the verge of that eternal separation. Inextricably blending in your bosom, there is mingled a longing for the power I can bequeath—doubt of your own convictions—reproach of me, as the author of that doubt—and self-reproach at such a feeling

towards me. You are not indeed prepared to play the avenger yet, but you are shaken in your devotion to mankind, and the thought has flashed across you that irrespective of good or evil to others; there lies a middle path of self-gratification between the devotion of power to my cynicism or your expansiveness.

You have discerned that there may be charms—in humbling the proud—in frustrating the wary, and in the common-place pre-eminence of success—and with these there mingles and obtrudes the vision of a fair girl, with eyes of liquid violet, and lips whose expression speaks without sound or motion. There is about her an ideal beauty, a magnanimity, and restlessness of aspiration, which added to the interest of her fate, has strangely troubled you, and made you feel, if only for a moment, that with such a mate it would be sweet to wander through the world's common-place ways, abandoning alike

the path which your enthusiasm had shaped out so perseveringly, and that to which I inexorably point the way. You reject the thought. She is the daughter of the very man who in the full pomp and circumstance of success and wealth, deliberately denied the trifling boon you asked—the medicine to my malady.—Do you not long when you think on that to play the desolator!

“This is one of the earth’s great ones—he was bartering his own child when he gave you that refusal. Your own ears heard it. And to whom? Oh, mercy! to *his* son the son of my arch foe and persecutor! What has it come to this, that even the mightiest struggle irremediably in his toils, and has this man become so far the idol of his fellows that his successes follow me into this corner of the earth to disturb my dying hour?

“Mark! Tempest, mark the difference betwixt him and me! Mine was diffusive bene-

volence and the light of genius ; he had but sordid thoughts and vulgar cunning. Through me he rose ; yet me his foot kept down—and now how stand we with the world ? To my penury are denied the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table, who for him has no refusal—decking even with a bridal wreath the blushing temples of his virgin child, to drag her to his feet a voluntary offering !

“ It was that man, Tempest, opened first my eyes to human baseness—He filled my heart with gall ; he cowed and broke my spirit. To find refuge from him I have cowered into obscurity ; but now there is a haven more secure—the grave, which opening for me, gives me the daring, which has always failed me, to hurl defiance at him.

“ Even now, Tempest, I would humble him to the base man he has humbled, if there were only time.”

“ Wretched creature ! ” thought Tempest, referring to the senator, “ of that time which

might be salvation to him, his cold-hearted denial has deprived you. This agitation wastes life terribly."

"Aye," continued the old man, "life is wasting—let us once more lay bare the vital action."

"Consider," said Tempest, "that every time we augment the intensity of life and of perception, it is at the expense of the little that remains to you."

"Nevertheless, I will it."

"Then I obey you." And the youth gradually increased the power of the magnetic spell.

This exalted stage of clairvoyance was frightful even to the maiden who stood partially within its influence, for not only was thought conveyed with indescribable rapidity from brain to brain, but all the most hidden properties of matter, with all the psychological phenomena which enter into the being of that wondrous creature—man, became to the mes-

merised distinctly and intelligibly perceptible, The innermost secrets of the human frame, with the mysteries of its organisation and vital principle, were rendered visible to the eye as the workings of the colored fluid, which through transparent tubes of glass ingeniously simulates the circulation of the blood, to illustrate its action in the human body.

“It draws to a close,” said the old man, reading his companion’s thoughts, “without exceeding the span allotted to common-place mortality; for if, on the one hand, I have discerned and baffled those maladies to which the ignorant fall a prey, on the other, the mind had preyed upon the body—If on one hand, science has enabled us to distinguish the evil and pointed out the cure, our poverty and man’s avarice, or incredulity, forbids the medicine.

“Nature in its organic products presents in a thousand forms the remedy for every malady; and to these the appetites which we denaturalised

so often, afford a general index. That art which soars above this perverted sense of animal perception, teaches us that there are moments when a drop of dew, or a grain of wheat, or a draught of the sea's brine, may change, divert, or influence in the germ the causes of decay. Thus months and months have we baffled dissolution; but now the remedy which might still for weeks have protracted the progress of decay, is beyond our reach. The want of one single berry of the grape is fatal—and my hours are numbered."

The youth with a sigh relaxed the exhausting intensity of the magnetic current till it had reached a point at which the maiden lost her perceptive power, but at the same time was freed from the restraint of speech and motion which she had suffered. She stepped forth up to the Galvanists, who now became for the first time cognisant of her presence. It was the Lady Calliroë holding in her hand the

fruit the old man coveted, which she had come to offer.

When she had dismissed her women and parted with her favorites and her flowers, she had resolved to take a last look and adieu of scenes that she should no more revisit with the feeling of her girlhood.

She had wandered through the long galleries, the orangery, the artificial gardens. Here hung obtrusively one bunch of grapes amongst its decayed and mouldering fellows large and tempting as the enchanted fruit of the subterranean gardens into which the magician ushered Aladdin. It recalled the haughty suppliant, his strange request and the unfeeling answer of her father. A sudden impulse urged her in this last hour of her freedom to minister even to the morbid longing of a dying man. She reached the burnside cottage, raised the latch, and, entering, had been witness to the scene described.

The grey-beard clutched at her offering



with all the eagerness with which old age clings to life.

A ray of more kindly feeling chequered for a moment his misanthropy; but the reaction of the exhausting influence to which he had been subject, and the suddenness of this reprieve overpowered him for the moment. Meanwhile the shades of night had darkened, and the sound of the castle bell was heard tolling as if in hurried anxiety across the park; for the Lady Calliroë had been missed, and it was hoped that this signal might recal her. Tempest, with brief thanks for her benevolent intervention, offered to lead her across the park. The night was cold; the Lady Calliroë not in attire to brave the external atmosphere.—The youth looked for his cloak to throw around her, and then as he recalled that he had parted with it, and stammered an excuse, a blush rose to his brow, and another to her cheek; for she remembered that with its price he, hungering, had ministered to the neces-

sities of a stranger ; whilst she contrasted her father's conduct with this generous devotion. They walked on both in agitation and in silence. The Lady Calliroë appearing to Tempest an ideal being beautiful as good, whose apparition had restored him to confidence in human nature ; and her thoughts filled with wonder at the occurrences of the day, which had called into being sensations and given her an insight into things she had not dreamed of a few hours before, and in this reverie she made strange comparisons between Julian, her future husband, and the youth beside her.

Meanwhile the galvanist was left alone ; his thoughts gradually cleared from their torpor. There was before him a reprieve of life, and his mind returned to one of the oscillations of doubt to which it had ever fitfully been subject.

“ After all,” he mused, “ why should I dread to shrink into obscurity—what matter

if my individuality merge into eternity unnoticed as a rain-drop in the mass of waters? Have I not merited that which has happened to me—if I had never followed the dictates of revengeful feeling would despair and doubt be upon me now? Should I, like the imprisoned Afrit, who vowed through centuries to recompense his deliverer, and then to destroy whoever should free his captive spirit—should I have alternated between the wish to curse or bless my kind? perhaps in man evil is not unredeemed. Age, both in man and in society, may render them corrupt and harsh; but is there not in youth an ever freshening fount? Age has denied me even a few brief hours, but youth has wiped out its delinquencies.”

Thus musing, the old man raised to his lips the grapes. Never was mouthful more alluring, since Eve tasted of the fatal apple which, in exchange for happiness and ignorance, was to bring death and knowledge into the world,—never since the freshening draught the angel

of the desert brought to Agar's child.

He raised the fruit with the bloom on its deep purple, and lo! like the apples of the dead sea's shore, on his lips it turned to ashes. A dust, black and loathsome as that which fills the grains of blighted corn, fell from the fair husk ; and at this sight the old man fell back and sickened to his very soul. **HE KNEW AND RECOGNISED HIS SLAVE AND MASTER.**

## CHAPTER V.

## THE SECRET OF THE GALVANIST.

THUS while Sir Jasper believed that he had secured for ever his own ascendancy through the projected alliance between the daughter of his follower and the son of old Cash, and whilst the *Moderate* leader was equally assured that he could command the all-powerful co-operation of so important a confederate, this personage himself regarded the intrigues of both these politicians with the contemptuous

confidence of one who felt that he held in his own hands the trump cards of the game, besides possessing the self-proven art of playing it with inexhaustible patience and unequalled skill.

But though the fate of the "United Monarchies" thus appeared to rest between the combinations of these two popular statesmen and the modern Plutus, we have seen that an old man—an outcast in his dotage—arrogated to himself the power of far superior arbitration, and threatened, as he shivered over his cheerless hearth, by an occult agency, so to convulse society as to reduce them all to insignificance.

So while in the dark ages the gloomy foresight of tyranny was erecting blood-cemented strongholds intended to perpetuate through centuries their dominion—a monk in his lonely cell was compounding from three vulgar substances a grain, like a mustard seed, which by

its explosive power was destined eventually to change the whole art of war, destroying for ever the security of these once impregnable fortalices, and rendering ineligible for all martial purposes the very sites on which they had been reared.

So whilst the ambition of churchmen---pressing into its service the learning and experience of the past, and the sagacity and prescience of genius---was labouring to complete and fructify a system of traditionary and intellectual coercion which would have insured the perpetuity of priestly domination---a humble artisan was contriving those little pieces of metal which in the form of types were progressively to banish ignorance from the world, and to annihilate all monopoly of knowledge.

In a like manner the old galvanist in the depth of his obscurity had called into existence a new power, which endowed his decrepitude with a tremendous faculty of which he was at once the author and the victim.

This self-created influence had snatched from him the last brief hours of life to which old age clings so tenaciously, and though in the person of Tempest he left after him one gifted with courage, enterprise, and intellect sufficient to fructify the opportunities he had wasted, this inheritor of his discoveries, though qualified for successful antagonism with the colossal abuses of society, had, in the very power to which allusion has been made, a terrible and perhaps fatal adversary.

Who and what was this mysterious agency the creature and destroyer of the galvanist, and future rival of his successor's triumph?

THIS RIVAL WAS AN INSECT.



## CHAPTER XVI.

## THE HISTORY OF THE INSECT.

THE wide world teems with life—life assuming in endless succession inexhaustible varieties of form.

If we refer to the past, the geologic traces of those gradual or convulsive changes which by means of water or of fire our earth has undergone, are known to be filled with organic remains indicative of the existence of whole vegetable and animal systems which have

flourished, decayed, and passed away to give place to novel combinations of vitality with matter.

If we confine ourselves to one of these series—that contemporaneous with ourselves, we find that each extension of our visual or perceptive powers discovers life where it had never been suspected.

Philosophers of antiquity had conjectured our globe itself to be but an enormous animal, and pantheism, which forms the unacknowledged foundation of so many creeds, resolves itself into a supposition that the whole universe constitutes one mighty existence of which our world is a component, but infinitesimal atom.

Natural philosophers, of modern date, have suspected that in some form of hopelessly imperceptible minuteness, life was every where occasioning the various properties of matter.

Rocks and islands growing into continents have risen from the deep, and seas are being filled up by a worm. The sands on which

the Prussian Capital stands are discovered to be living.

The plague and cholera are suspected of organic life, which is distinctly visible in a disease more loathsome, though less dangerous.

Life, indeed, when scattered, appears to be reproduced in some fresh combination, as in the myriad of crawling things which swarm from a carcass, or the grass which springs from a grave—and its dispersion resembles that of the rust, or oxide, which, driven off in the furnace from a bar of iron, rises in the form of a gas and readily settles on other pieces of the same bright metal rusting or oxidising them.

The principle of life was once held to be the same with soul, and the power of thought in man, or of instinct in animals, and it was held blasphemous to suppose that science could ever resolve its mysteries.

Intolerance and incredulity at that day forgot that a time had been when—alike to the

meditations of the sage and the perception of the most vulgar understanding—water had appeared incontrovertibly a pure and simple element, and light and heat identical.

They forgot that those who first argued that the sun was stationary were charged with impiety, or that Rome and Oxford branded the early Geologists with infidelity. They forgot—when stigmatising as blasphemous the mere conjecture that man, who had called down lightning from the clouds, should ever learn to animate matter—that unless we deny him all free will, Providence had, in its natural order, endowed him with a certain limited controul over animal and vegetable life. It is the volition of the farmer which fills his fields with living kine, his yard with poultry ; it is the will and foresight of the silkworm breeder which collects myriads of insects which but for him would never have had existence, and it was once at the option of both to determine that they should or should not have been.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, when the pretended knowledge of the day consisted, as regards galvanism, in the discovery of a few electric phenomena, and was limited to the recognition of certain effects of which the causes remained utterly mysterious—at that period already we read that chance had enabled experimentalists to give accidental life to certain animalculæ.

The fact was disputed at the time, and the discovery denied with all the vituperative zeal of envy disguised as godliness and presumptuous ignorance in the mask of learned humility.

These experiments were, indeed, afterwards successfully repeated at long intervals, but the results originating in chance and not in combination, were so clamorously denied and malignantly decried, that they remained apocryphal in the popular estimation.

There was, however, one individual who, having witnessed this accidental creation of

animal life—encouraged by its proven practicability—devoted days and nights to the study of its mysterious principles.

When the first glimmering of truth, bewildering because incomplete, broke in upon him, in the exultation of his heart he published his discoveries, to the world, but the world, strong in the opinion of its wise ones, laughed to scorn his pretensions, ridiculing them as a delusion worthy of the credulity which could accept as true the fact on which his anticipations were founded.

Nevertheless, through discouragement and contempt he still pursued his way, till at length his efforts were rewarded. He obtained a result which, though imperfect, differed as much as light and darkness from that which his predecessors had attained. His was an *invention or combination*, theirs had been a mere *discovery*.

Minute, mishapen, and organically incomplete—a creature grew beneath his hand and

palpitated for an instant in transient vitality. It was but for an instant, and no eye but his own was witness to his hard earned triumph, but he derived irrepressible hope and energy from that proud moment in which, with the profound conviction of Galileo addressing his inquisitors through his prison bars, he too could utter "*Still it moves.*"

Years more of labour passed away, but at length his object was accomplished, and he had called into existence a creature not only endowed with momentary life, but gifted with an organisation sufficiently perfect, to enable it both to live and propagate its species.

As every product of the animal and vegetable kingdoms may be classified, this insect belonged to the genus of Acari.

A half century ago the *Acarus* was known to comprise more than sixty varieties—the tick in sheep, the mite in cheese, the wonderfully minute animalcules discovered in wax, and those occasioning a skin disease once nationalised be-

yond the Tweed—belong to the tribe of Acari.

The new variety created by the Galvanist was a thousand fold smaller than the mite. In the long process of its formation myriads of shapes had grown beneath his plastic hand, hideous and strange as those first living works of nature which in the early stages of her labour peopled the earth's surface—weltering in its tepid slime—the *pleiosauri*, *ichyosauri*, and those shapeless and cold blooded things which were replaced by creations more perfect in serial succession down to man.

But nature in the most crude of her attempts had ever been complete, even when imperfect. She brought forth no abortions like those of the galvanist's creation in his long enduring trials—no fragmentary bodies half limbed and wanting the organs of digestion, respiration, and secretion, or incapable of renovation and increase. Yet these were all errors which had to be amended as he pro-



ceeded with his task, and the last, but most important of the obstacles surmounted had been the difficulty of conferring on his creature the faculty of assimilation with any natural substance, (thereby to recruit the exhaustion of body which life inevitably occasions) and secondly of propagation.

So deeply had the Galvanist been engrossed with these last problems, that in solving them he shot beyond his mark, endowing the new *Acarus* with this power to an extent which made the insect, though invisible even to the microscope, a fearful monstrosity.

The venomous animalcule, supposed to occasion the Djuma, or black plague, owes its chief terrors to its contagious and infectious character, which is nothing but the faculty of fearfully rapid increase, under given circumstances happily rare—the favouring conjunction of miasma in the air, or of predispositions in human bodies.

But this new *Acarus* created by the Gal-

vanist was possessed of a power of multiplication which a thousandfold exceeded in rapidity that even of the insect of the plague, and furthermore it did not depend on the casual combination of putrescent exhalations from the earth, or of morbid emanations from animal bodies for a congenial element in which to exist, but was fitted to live, find nourishment, and develop its horrible prolificness in any medium through which its creator chose that it should propagate its being.

Having mastered the great secret by which nature adapts the organs of its creatures to the pre-existent substances on which it intends that they should feed, he too could modify the animalcule he had made, so that according to his pleasure it could find sustenance in a seed, or fluid, or animal matter, increasing to an extent so fearful as entirely to change their properties and nature.

The Galvanist—still in his youth—had paused after his long labours. Though

immatured and partial he had made varied and great discoveries, but the very necessities of science now recalled his thoughts from the world of speculation and experiment in which they had been absorbed to the realities of common life.

Great means were requisite to prosecute his investigation, — he was steeped in penury and decried as a visionary.

But thus aroused from his long abstraction, he recalled the gentle cause of that ambition which had urged him in his strange pursuits, whilst at the same time he became acquainted with a fact which filled his breast with hope.

Though in earlier years, his wild and incoherent genius had occasioned disgraceful failure—succeeding to the most flattering promise in his studies—and though contemptuous indignation had replaced the sanguine expectations of his relatives, there was still one fair kinswoman whose looks were always tender

and whose faith in him had still remained unshaken.

He had, besides, a friend tried and true, who through every failure had rendered homage to his merit, regarding all his words as oracular, and retaining the fervency of his belief in the galvanist's eventual success.

This friend, indeed, had been the medium of communication betwixt him and his sweet cousin Anna when denied her father's door.

For some months he had indeed lost sight of both, when driven back upon the world by his necessities, he learned that the death of a relation had bestowed a vast fortune upon his friend.

Chance seemed thus to have crowned his wishes. His friend possessed that wealth which now was the only requisite of success, and success would unite him to his cousin. Under these circumstances he proceeded without delay to seek him out.

He found his friend, but altered in temper as well as circumstances.

He had succeeded to his uncle, a great contractor in the last war waged between the United Monarchies and the Democratic Union, and the enthusiastic and confiding youth had become the abrupt-mannered and supercilious man of business.

He expressed pithily and distinctly that the ideas and feelings of his earlier years had undergone considerable modification, he confessed his present disinclination to every thing speculative beyond the sphere of his present occupations, and pleading the pressure of his numerous engagements, bowed the galvanist out before the latter could recover the power of utterance, or bring himself to make one appeal to the memory of the past.

"My best wishes will always attend you," said the contractor with his hand upon the door, "but I have now a credit and a business character at stake, and cannot consequently

with any prudence allow my name to be associated with that of visionary schemes and not very practical projectors. I regret, therefore, that I cannot with sincerity express any desire to renew our former intimacy, even though you have become a connexion."

"A connexion!" echoed the galvanist.

"A very *remote* connexion," replied the contractor, "since I have married your cousin Anna."

On this startling intelligence of the treachery of his friend and the inconstancy of his inamorata, the galvanist felt stunned and overwhelmed, and staggered to the gate without remark or exclamation.

But at night he wandered back to the spot. Lights glittered from the casements, and the sounds of festivity broke upon his ear. He cursed alike the woman, who had deceived, and the friend, who had betrayed him: but as he walked away, asking himself whether that curse should remain for ever barren, he passed the

vast rows of warehouses beside the harbour in which even at that hour vessels were unloading to fill up these magazines with stores of corn, the contractor's property.

One sack, as the porters were removing it, had burst. The galvanist gathered up a handful of the corn, he took it home, he adapted to it the vital organisation of the insect he had created, and thus innoculated with this living venom, he restored the grain to another heap.

Months after, the contractor, in the place of his hoarded store, found only husks and ashes, but from this poisonous germ the contagion eventually spread through every land, and thus the galvanist let loose upon the world his creation from the glass vial in which he had so long imprisoned it.

It was only after a lengthened interval that he became conscious of the full effect of that intended retribution.

Then like a child who having produced a mighty conflagration by the ignition of a straw,

surveys with amazement and alarm the progress of the devouring element and the extension of the fire in which whole edifices crumble—so he found that disease, alarm, and famine were threatening or consuming tens of thousands.

His first thought was to frame a remedy for the evil he had occasioned, and he who had contrived that fatal combination knew enough of nature's secrets to contrive the antidote.

His second was to apply it unreservedly.

But meanwhile he discovered that the contractor himself, though he had suffered temporary embarrassment, had in the long run derived an accession of prosperity from the general calamity.

The baffled malignity of the galvanist now knew no bounds, and as he brooded over his projects of revenge, it struck him that he held in his own hands the means of power and fortune which would help in its achievement.

But in the first steps he took to utilise the



important knowledge of which he was possessed, he failed through utter ignorance of the world. The excitement of his manner, and the magnitude of his pretensions causing him to be universally scouted as an impostor, or neglected as a madman.

No one would listen to him, or entertain his project, till at last, embittered against all mankind, he retired to his garret a confirmed misanthropist, seeking consolation in the thought that at least all humanity would suffer for baulking him, through its incredulity, of his revenge.

His landlord, a dealer in marine stores, a hard featured and hard fisted man, who had turned a deaf ear to what he thought his lodger's ravings, grew, however, suddenly respectful.

The fact is, that the realisation of certain minute prognostications made by the galvanist had furnished his host with that proof of his guest's superior knowledge which the latter had

neglected to adduce when seeking to obtain credit in his wildly improbable assertions.

The galvanist, whose phreneological acquirements had given him an insight into the salient points of individual character, from want of which he had suffered so bitterly in his choice of mistress and of friend, was struck with the qualifications which, in his estimation, peculiarly fitted this personage for participation in his secret, and co-operation in his plans.

The characteristics of John Cash, the rag and bottle merchant, were an insatiable thirst of gain, combined with unscrupulous energy, deep foresight, and profound astuteness in its pursuit. These qualities never degenerated into impatient avarice or desultory cunning, but had assumed the form of the most comprehensive avidity, boundless in its desires, but blent with a practical ingenuity which taught him without endangering the future how best to secure the present.

This man by degrees extracted from the galvanist his secret, on the double condition that he should, in the first place, compass the ruin of the contractor, and in the second, divide his gains with the originator of them.

John Cash fulfilled the first of these stipulations, but as to the second he found the temper of his partner dangerous to his plans, and soon learned to regard the pretensions set forth by him as so incompatible with his own views, that the day on which the contractor died a bankrupt, the galvanist himself was carried off to a lunatic asylum.

Every thing connected with this arbitrary incarceration had been legally and plausibly contrived, and the incoherence of the victim, together with the apparent wildness of his assertions, lent readily to the deception practised.

Here in solitude the galvanist spent several years.

During the first period of his captivity he had proposed, amidst all his animosity to

his persecutor, to signalise his liberation by the devotion of his discoveries to the benefit of mankind, like the genius in the Arabian Nights Tales, with whom he had compared himself, who punished for rebellion, by imprisonment in a sealed vessel cast into the deep, had, during the first ages of his captivity, vowed eternal gratitude to whoever should deliver him.

But time passed on, and this feeling changed to one of profound aversion towards his fellow-men, a frame of mind on which he effected his escape, and which ever after influenced his actions.

The coercion he had undergone, had inspired him, however, with so much dread of the author of his sufferings, that he could neither recover his self-possession nor muster even the slender courage he formerly possessed.

The hare cowering in its concealment, and startled at every falling leaf, lives not a life of more unceasing apprehension. At length self-

conscious that this deficiency would doom his malevolence to perpetual sterility, he resolved to find out an accomplice, with vigour, youth intelligence, and daring, which he might fashion into an instrument of retribution. With this view he had chosen and brought up his young companion.

His task was not yet done, his aim yet unachieved, when, worn out with the exhausting nature of his studies, old age, and decay, too rapidly gained upon him. His latter years, embittered by premonition of eventual failure, if sometimes chequered by the suspicion that his misfortunes had not been undeserved, and by resolves more charitable, had yet been characterised by deepening misanthropy. So fretful became his temper that his malignity was roused as readily as that of the weird women of legendary tales. The jeers of children—the mere contrast between his own privation and the superfluity of others—or the contumelious treatment to which his insignifi-

cance and penury were exposed in an age which respected only wealth and station, were sufficient to draw forth his curse, and sometimes that curse proved far more portentous than even the malediction of the witch of old was once believed to be.

Some weeks before he had wandered—sunning himself in the welcome beams of an autumnal noon—across the park, up to the Castle gardens.

The old man looked wistfully through the glass into the grapery, where the fruit hung in luxuriant bunches, here green and ripening, there darkening into purple or lightening into amber. At this moment a surly voice warned him away with a vehement execration—"What business had he in the park? why was he loitering there?"

The old man tottered home, but as his fear subsided, his malignity was raised. He did not rest till he had escaped from his companion, and picked his trembling way back to

the spot from which he had been driven so harshly.

Here, his palsied hands sought out the root of the vine amongst its protecting straw; he scraped an incision with his nail, and innoculated the tree with living venom. The poison spread—and if the vine had been a plant annually propagated from seed, like corn, the same contagion which had threatened the staff of life would, far and wide, have destroyed the vintage.

This act had been committed during his hours of imbecility—planned with the cunning, carried out with the tenacity, and forgotten with the readiness of a weakened or disordered intellect.

There remained of his angry feeling and malignant purpose no trace in his recollection but a longing for the fruit which had tempted him to his revenge.

Whether this desire had grown into an idiosyncrasy so powerful as to affect his phy-

sical frame or whether instinctively indicative of its requirements, Tempest soon after discovered that use of the grape could alone preserve his expiring vitality a little longer.

This was the reason why he had humbled his proud spirit to beg it of the Senator, and why the glowing fruit, brought by that magnate's daughter had turned to ashes as the old galvanist raised it to his lips.

Self-baffled—the venom he had instilled had poisoned—the insect to which he had given life had devoured its core.

He recognised its presence—he knew the mark of his own suicidal hand, and in that hour of anguish obtruded vividly the desolating thought that he had been through life, even to its closing scene, the author of his own undoing.

The retrospection of the past shewed nothing but a waste of blasted hopes, keen miseries, and opportunities misapplied.

He felt that frittered away in petty vindic-



tiveness his vast discoveries had died abortive through narrowness of heart. He felt that his own creation, the slave of his own thoughts had in truth become his master—the arbiter of his destiny, leading him only into the mad-house cell—the fugitive's retreat, the pauper's pallet, and the grave at last.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## THE LEGACY OF THE GALVANIST.

BUT that remorse and doubt gave way before he thought that departing life and consciousness allowed no further meditation.

Approaching dissolution threatened to snatch from him that hope of retribution on the authors of his wrongs, over which he had brooded for so many years, and which had sustained him through so many trials. A day, an hour, a minute might plunge him in the im-

potence of death. All awe of the grave into which he was descending vanished before the idea that it would bury in a common oblivion his name and sufferings, discoveries and projects, and his habitual misanthropy arose, like a giant refreshed, in all its gloom, in the dark recesses of his heart, at the thought of dying forgotten and unavenged.

This hatred, though embracing all humanity, distinguished two objects, one his old persecutor—the other society at large, which baffling his revenge had become, in his estimation, the tacit accomplice of his arch enemy.

Now it was still in the power of the galvanist to arrest or to extend the contagion which he had spread; but in one case he felt that he would favour the individual, in the other, the race he hated.

He could not brook the thought that his old foe should profit by the extension of his curse upon mankind, and he grew phrensied at the idea that society which had spurned and scorned

and trampled him whilst living should after his death derive impunity from his persecutors' punishment.

Reflection showed him that if he destroyed the contagion mankind would be benefitted and the source of his enemy's prosperity drained dry, but how should he thus affect the immense wealth which old Cash had already accumulated? On the other hand if he punished his fellowmen, by leaving the disease to prey upon their food, his enemy would remain possessed of an irresistible source of power; and thus it seemed that in any case the sole effect of his attempts at retribution would prove beneficial to one or other of those on whom he thirsted for revenge.

In this dark hour he concentrated by a desperate effort of volition all the last energies of his mind, and conjured to his aid the most terrible secrets of his art.

Thus enlightened he devised a plan which

reconciled the contradictory exigences of his double hatred.

"If," thought the galvanist, "I cannot deprive this man of power I may crush him by increasing it a hundred-fold, and I may bequeath a curse to man which shall prove a seed of such deadly animosity between the individual and the race, that like scorpions girt by fire, the narrowing circle shall inevitably bring them into fatal contact."

With palsied hands the old man seized the vessel which contained the insect germ in the last stage of incomplete formation preparatory to infusion of the principle of life. He had often intended to adapt its organisation so that it should prove an antidote to the contagion he had spread, by fitting this new creation to prey upon the old in imitation of nature which renders one species of living creature destructive of another to limit the increase of animal life.

But now on the contrary he was about to disseminate through completion of the embryo a venom more widely diffusive than before; because he meditated its adaption not only to corn—which admitted counteraction of the poison in the seed, or substitution of roots as a staple article of food—but, successively to every article which could be converted into food for man, by means of a serial transmutation of form common to insect life, and such as we witness in the change which makes the caterpillar, moth or butterfly. Before breathing animation into the inert matter, he paused, however, and there rose before him the vision of future generations suffering for his crime. Gaunt multitudes, pale with famine and ghastly with disease, seemed to flit past, upbraiding him with hungry looks. The mother drew and held up the dead babe from her withered, milkless breasts. The young snatched ravenously from the aged the last bone against which their carious teeth were crumbling. Hollow cheeked

men tottered past with knees giving way beneath their slender weight—the child shrieked feebly for its parent, and the parent's voice was too faint to answer to the child's appeal. Ague with chattering teeth—consumption's hectic flush—the plague's black spots and cholera's lived blue were all discernible amongst that crowd which flowed past the old man—a living stream of pestilence and famine, to sink into the earth whose surface skeleton-covered imaged a mighty Golgotha.

He shuddered; but the vision changed. He lay motionless in his shroud, and the heedless feet of a laughing multitude trampled the sod above him as if he had never been, cheering his persecutor who passed smiling by upon his grave.

The vision changed again. From out the earth re-appeared the ghastly crew and gathered round his enemy with hideous gib-

bering and famished looks, and cannibal ferocity.

They seize him by his garments, they twine their bony fingers into his grey locks—they clasp their skeleton hands about his throat and drag him back into the graves they had quitted.

At this sight the Galvanist gave a shout of exultation, his mind was made up and he proceeded with what might be termed alike his process or his spell.

The new variety of the insect started into life. Immeasurably smaller than the minutest atom discernible even through the microscope which magnifies the hair on a fly's leg to the thickness of a human body, it was only visible to magnetic eyes; and fearful was the sight as joyously sentient of existence, it rolled its hideous form in grotesque gambols, continually emitting—like the dark clouds of sepia with which the angry cuttle-fish tints the water—in one unceasing stream myriads upon myriads of its



larvæ, each in the space of a single second reaching a stage of maturity which enabled it in turn to develop an equally horrible prolificness.

The thought struck the Galvanist that he could still keep this plague imprisoned in the vessel in which he had given it life, but quelling this better impulse, he opened the cottage door and, kneeling beside the brook that ran before his dwelling, plunged the insect into its waters, thus letting loose a fresh plague on the world.

Henceforth he knew that whithersoever that poisoned current made its way it would bear contagion with it—whether by tainting the broad river, or raised up as a mist into the clouds and descending on the earth in the form of rain or dew, or whether filtering through its strata to reappear in the bubbling spring and irrigate its surface.

The minutest globules into which the fluid could be divided by heat or pressure, or filtra-

tion still constituted each a sphere in which these fearful animaculæ could live and thrive, eventually penetrating wherever the liquid atoms combined with any substance, and poisoning as they penetrated all organic bodies requiring moisture as a component element of their being.

The old man shook back his hoary locks which streamed in the night wind, and his dim eyes sparkled feverishly as he thus uttered his last denunciation.

“ When the success of the statesman is forgotten—when the feuds of party are buried—when the strife of nations is hushed in the general desolation---this deed of the nameless and unremembered dead will fill the world with terror. This is my legacy to mankind !”

\* \* \* \* \*

The Galvanist then staggered back to his chair by the cheerless hearth and into his former

torpor, and this man, who in satanic majesty of power for evil had just been scattering abroad a curse perhaps destined to re-act on generations yet unborn; stretched out his shivering hands again over the cold ashes, exclaiming in querulous and piping treble:—

“ Dame Slowman ! is that you Dame Slowman? You borrowed my last pinch of snuff—where is the pinch of snuff you borrowed, neighbour Slowman ?”

“ Poor mad old soul go to your bed, that was six months ago,” said Dame Slowman, who this time really was beside him; and then the old man, resting his elbows on his knees, buried his face in his bony hands and spoke no more.

“ Aye,” said Dame Slowman, putting down in some embarrassment, as Tempest entered, the empty teapot whose broken spout she had raised to her withered lips.

“ Only think, Master Tempest, he is dead and cold,—deary, deary me! gone without priest

or bell. He was not a very bad man, so I will get my thimble and go fetch Dame Gabble to lay out the body and sew up those sheets into a shroud for old acquaintance sake.'"

Tempest seized the old man's hand, but found that his limbs were already rigid. He stood in the dreary world alone—disinherited of the dead man's secret.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## THE MARRIAGE CONTRACT.

WHATEVER might be the peculiarities of old Cash he was of all men living the least inclined to waste time in idle formalities or to hesitate in coming to the point.

The preliminary arrangements of the intended marriage having been briefly recapitulated, he readily acknowledged the expediency set forth by the minister of hastening the nuptial ceremony; and all parties being thus agreed it was decided that the Lady Calliroë

should be at once introduced to her future father-in-law, whilst the task of preparing her for the exceeding precipitancy of the event was cheerfully assumed by Sir Jasper, whose persuasive powers had already proved so effective with the senator's daughter.

Meanwhile the father of the bridegroom was solicited to glance over the marriage contract, which for brevity and conciseness would have astonished our prolix ancestors, though it was, notwithstanding, a complete and valid instrument, having been drawn up by the ex-lord Chancellor, Besom, there present, (having accompanied Sir Jasper) for this paradoxical personage, though avowedly a *Moderate* and consequently a political opponent, was almost exclusively on terms of intimacy with the leading members of the Rationalist party, into half of whose secrets he was initiated.

Though this document contained nothing but concessions and suggestions previously made

by the father of the bridegroom, both the Prime Minister and the Senator watched his perusal of it with profound anxiety ; and when at length he paused and hem'd ominously prefatory to an observation, the eyes of the ex-chancellor, who delighted in mischief, twinkled, and the joint of his nose curled nervously, as much as to say " I thought so ;"—for this legal dignitary possessed the singular faculty of working his olfactory organ up and down at pleasure.

In fact its stipulations were so advantageous to the Senator that it became difficult to believe that a man as shrewd as old Cash should finally have agreed to an arrangement which offered so little reciprocity.

By the first article of this contract, on the one hand, the Senator (duly styled by all his titles) agreed to the marriage of the Lady Calliroë with Eustatius, only son of John Cash, settling upon his daughter (with reservation of a personal life interest therein) the

whole of his possessions, of which the enumeration occupied more space than even the recapitulation of his dignities and honors.

By the second article John Cash, who persisted in being described as a "general dealer," consented to the union of his son Eustatius with the Lady Calliroë, only daughter of the Senator; undertaking at the same time to satisfy and liquidate all debts, mortgages, and charges on the said property; and here followed the gross amount of these liabilities, which rendered it at once apparent that the father of the bridegroom was in reality conferring this vast wealth upon his son's wife, besides giving her father a life interest in the very property of which he no longer held any but nominal and temporary possession.

Could it be credited that old Cash would finally agree to this bargain? Nevertheless when he spoke it was to read through aloud the third article, which stipulated "That the Senator transferred to his future son-in-law,



Eustatius, all other property of which he was possessed, together with all rights and claims to which he might be, or ever had been, entitled."

The ex-chancellor smiled sarcastically and felt it on the tip of his tongue to explain that "The Senator having, in consideration of their full value, given up *all* his possessions which his creditors were about seizing, liberally endows his son-in-law with the *remainder*."

But at this moment the Senator was called aside by the seneschal, and grew deadly pale at the communication made to him. He was about to quit the room when the ex-chancellor, who not being bigotted to any social proprieties, had followed at his elbow, turned to the remainder of the party and acquainted them aloud with the cause of their host's agitation.

"She is off, gentlemen! —the bird is flown!"

"No!" said the Premier, whose utter dismay could only be equalled by that of Lord Lofty ;

whilst old Cash quietly shrugged up his shoulders.

“Gentlemen! my child is indeed missing,” said the father of the fugitive; “but it is impossible that she can have fled; she is eccentric in her habits; she has wandered abroad and lost her way: we will cause instant search to be made.”

“Search or pursuit, if need be,” observed the profoundly vexed Sir Jasper.

“Stay for one moment,” said old Cash. “Whether the Lady Calliroë, your daughter, have only temporarily absconded or finally fled, my mind is made up. This alliance was political in its objects, we cannot let them be defeated by the whims of either boy or girl. I am willing, happen what may, to abide by all the conditions of that contract; let us therefore add to it the stipulation—that in the event of any impediment arising to the marriage, whether from the disinclination of any party concerned, or from any other

cause that all our promises be equally binding."

"This is an instance of more than Roman magnanimity," said the minister. "And so you will remain bound by the enduring ties of friendship, if not by the frail bonds of relationship."

"I am grateful for the proposition; but I must seek my child," said the Senator.

"Could you insert such an addition briefly and validly?" asked old Cash of the ex-chancellor.

The great legal authority nodded and smiled assent.

"Then suppose it be done and signed before we leave this room."

"I must seek my daughter!" exclaimed the father of the bride hastening anxiously to the door, but he was arrested by the minister who whispered him.

"Be ruled by me, all may be well—all will be well—I doubt not; but do not throw away

this chance ; if your daughter has fled, pursuit is uncertain ; if found, it may prove unavailing, for she may be already married."

"Impossible," said the father.

"I know more than you do," replied Sir Jasper "of the Lady Calliroë's secrets. Let us, whilst the matter is yet doubtful, at once secure the offer made, which certainty may cause him to retract. You are ruined—she is ruined—I am undone if we miss this opportunity."

"But my child ! evil may have befallen her," said the senator aloud.

"If so," replied old Cash, "ten minutes will make no difference—you had better take me whilst I am in the mood."

"The insertion is made," said Lord Besom.

"And strictly valid?" asked the premier.

"Nothing can be more simple to execute," replied the ex-chancellor who took a boyish delight in baiting the trap in which the rich man chose to snare himself.

"There is even the *consideration* which the law formerly required. Our friend here pays the mortgages on all the property which our host settles on his own daughter and in compensation he cedes to that friend's son the *remainder*, besides all other rights he may possess."

"It will be intrinsically valuable," said Sir Jasper, "as a documentary curiosity if only for the conciseness of that clause, and as a valuable autograph. Does this meet with your approbation, Mr. Cash?"

"Exactly," said the millionaire, "let us sign it."

Lord Lofty in the midst of his deep agitation held out his hand to thank his guest for what he called "this noble proof of confidence."

"We can shake hands afterwards," replied Cash; "let us get this over—you write fluently, but not plainly; now look at me, I have not cramped my hand by over writing, I

cannot write anything but my name, but every time that I scratch it down," some little value usually changes hands. There it is—J, o, h, n, C, a, s, h! Doesn't it look like money!" exclaimed the old man surveying his work complacently and wiping off a blot with his thumb.

"Let us now each append our names as witnesses," said the premier with an expression of satisfaction which he could not quite repress upon his countenance at the final success of his difficult undertaking.

The anxious senator repaid the glance of his chief by a look of confidence and admiration, and the ex-chancellor slightly arched his bushy eyebrows in wonderment, and then raised the joint of his nose sarcastically.

"This is a great political fact," said the premier *sotto voce*.

"Faugh" replied the legal dignitary, "I was prepared for Circean wiles; I came to witness the capture of something like a Dragon

or a Hippogriffe by means of bird-limed twigs, and lo ! I have seen nothing but the immolation of a golden calf. The most absurd part of the exhibition is to mark the gravity with which he examines and appropriates his own copy of the contract which secures that valuable *remainder* to his son."

"Hush !" said the minister. "He affects to consider it an equivalent—the intuitive delicacy of a noble mind."

"I will not glose over any man," replied Lord Besom. "I say, the stolidity which, having let drop the oyster, treasures the empty shell. There are men born to greatness, there are men who achieve greatness, there are others who having greatness thrust upon them are smothered and extinguished beneath its weight like a baby under the fur cap of a grenadier. Our friend Cash is one of these. I congratulate you on his accession to your ranks, you will find him perhaps docile—certainly a fool. I have taken his measure. I know

width, depth, length and altitude, and I tell you that this much-vaunted individual will sink into that third-rate political insignificance which the crassness of his ignorance and the extent of his stupidity deserve."

The ex-chancellor during his tenure of office had originated the law which rendered his decisions final. Off the wool-sack his *dictum* was always without appeal, on which account the premier made no answer.



## CHAPTER XIX.

## A POLITICAL LESSON.

WHEN the disappearance of the Lady Calliroë was investigated, the conflicting testimony of the domestics led to the most serious apprehensions, no tidings could be obtained of the absentee. She had not passed any of the gates—and her palfrey had returned to its stall.

It was therefore evident that she must have crossed the park on foot. The great bell of the castle was tolled and messengers despatched in every direction to search the grounds and scour the adjacent roads.

"Be calm," said the minister to the senator, "we are now insured against all eventualities."

"Good God!" replied the distressed father. "What is all this to me now? You hear, she has taken a long farewell of all her women. We have pressed the matter too rashly on her. The thought of what may be distracts me! She is gone—God grant that it be not for ever."

"Hush! hush! be discreet and calm," replied Sir Jasper. "This must not reach the bridegroom's ears. From the insight this morning's interview gave me into your daughter's character I augur more favorably of the matter. Look here? the casement is open, her birds have flown away, she has but wandered out

into the park in search of them and missed her way."

"Clad in her indoor garments in the frosty air!" said the father with a shudder. "She may be lost upon the downs and perishing. Sudden faintness may have seized her, or perhaps in the darkness she has fallen over the cliff," and so saying the senator, deaf to all expostulation, rushed out into the park himself to seek his child.

Sir Jasper left alone descended and paced up and down the castle terrace. Here and there lanterns gleamed and torches flashed amidst the shrubberies and beneath the trees; disappearing gradually in the distance.

"This is agreeable on the eve of a great battle with an impatient party waiting for one," said the minister as he watched the moon rising from a cloud.

Its bright pale orb shone out at length in sudden brightness silvering with its beams the

fern and grass and foliage in deep contrast to the sombre shadows of the gigantic oaks ; and by this light Sir Jasper discerned two figures which stepping out of the gloom into the moonshine became at once distinct and prominent.

The one was a female figure arrayed in white, which he recognised without difficulty as that of the Lady Calliroë. This was sufficient for the minister, who descended the steps of the terrace and hastened towards her.

The senator's daughter and Tempest had almost simultaneously paused within stone's throw of the castle. Having seen her in safety he appeared unwilling to approach those inhospitable walls, and she, whilst mechanically expressing her thanks for his escort, did not press him further.

" We part, I trust, to meet again," said the Lady Calliroë. " I am a powerless girl to-day, but I may be launched in the great world to-morrow, and all that it lies in my power to

do for yourself or your companion you may command, only forgive or judge not too unkindly of one whose heart the perplexities of his position may have hardened."

"I bear no ill will to individuals, but if principles and classes were not beyond the range of individual feeling your intercession, lady, would persuade," replied Tempest with profound emotion, for such words from the lips of such a speaker were new to one whose recollections of social intercourse were so barren of kindness and of sympathy, for though acquainted with the marriage about to be forced upon her, he was not aware that unlike others she had derived a profound but natural interest from the insight which had been so singularly afforded her into his character and story.

"Perhaps," he added, timorously, "even in my humble insignificance I might reciprocate your offer. The rat gnawed through the lion's toils, and gratitude might find a spell to

avert misfortune, if so young, so gentle, and so fair you were about to be made unhappy?"

"We are the slaves of circumstance," replied the Lady Calliroë, hurriedly, for at that moment her eye caught the figure of some one watching them from the terrace, and she held out her hand to Tempest repeating the hope that they should meet again, but when this personage advanced towards her she beckoned him to stay.

She was not a little annoyed at perceiving Sir Jasper approach her, and the minister no less so at finding the daughter of his friend at such a juncture and at such an hour accompanied by a male companion, who, though not Julian, was still a stranger to her father's household.

"Thank God that you are found at last. Where have you been, dear Lady Calliroë? Your sudden disappearance has given rise to the most intense alarm."

"I do not know why," replied the Lady

Calliroë. "Was it not with you that I stipulated for a few hours to myself?"

"And this?" asked the minister in a tone paternally interrogative, as he turned to her companion who had made a motion to retire, but upon whose arm she had placed her hand detentively. The question was embarrassing.

Like one of those maidens with whom, in Biblical times, the angels of light descended on the earth to wander, and who knew through their disguise that they were not of the sons of men, at that moment her respect even for the statesman was feeble beside the interest and awe inspired by the preternatural acquirements of the youth beside her.

But how hope to convey her impressions on this subject, or explain the incongruity of her present companionship to the minister?

In this embarrassment she replied resolutely,

"This, Sir Jasper, is Tempest," and then addressing Tempest, added, "Since you have

accompanied me thus far across the park you will see me to my own threshold!"

The minister felt somewhat puzzled at the answer, — "This is Tempest!" Who and what was this youth Tempest privileged to take moonlight rambles with an heiress in her teens? Was he a foster brother or a poor relation, and what would the intended bridegroom think of such an intimacy? All these questions were to be solved, but as it was obvious that his friend's daughter suffered from the chill of the night air, he suggested that they should accelerate their pace.

"We conjectured that your birds had flown away, and that you had wandered imprudently in search of them."

"No," replied the Lady Calliroë, with a sigh; "I let them fly. We learn the value of freedom when about to lose it, and I have let free all I held in thrall."



"Freedom," said the minister, "is an ideal, and, as commonly understood, an imaginary abstraction. May not these fugitives long for the sweet captivity from which you have released them?"

"At this moment, the fluttering of a wing was discerned upon the ground—the Lady Calliroë stooped, it was her falcon, Nero.

The talons of the dying bird were inextricably fastened—in the neck of the dead Attila, his fellow favourite of the perch and hood, whom he had killed at a fell swoop, when loosed by their imprudent mistress, and finding no other quarry, one had pounced upon the other, an accident—which as all acquainted with falconry are aware—occasionally happens where birds, of inferior power to the gerfalcon, are used to hawk the heron, and consequently, flown more than one together.

On endeavouring to disengage the stiffening talons of her falcon—the faint vibration of the

pinions—the closing eye and succeeding immobility, shewed that all was over.

This was a few yards from the castle terrace ; on its first step there lay, with extended wings, one of her bright tropical birds, and on the marble pavement, another, and another, and another, their bright plumage glittering in the moonlight, but stiff and lifeless, as they had fallen numbed by the cold, when perishing in the wintry air, and beating their beauteous breasts in vain against the casements of her turret chamber, the prison house from which she had expelled them.

“Are these more of your *liberated* favourites?” asked the minister.

“Yes,” answered the senator’s daughter, haughtily ; and as if ashamed of the tear that she could not suppress. “These were the pastimes of my childish hours—but entering on a new phase of existence, I wished to leave no link—even trivial as this—between the past and present. I freed them, thoughtlessly de-

stroying where I would have benefitted. The act was inconsiderate, but is irrevocable. It should be forgotten."

"No my child," replied Sir Jasper. "On the contrary, it should be remembered, and treasured as a lesson in the political career which lies before you. Such, with mankind, is the effect of loosening the social bonds at which those whom they restrain cavil so bitterly, and which youthful enthusiasm is apt to untie as revolting and pernicious, whenever it has the power, removing as you have done, at once a trifling ill and the preventive of a fatal evil. You wished to give your favourites freedom—they have met with an untimely fate, and you with disappointment. Denizens of a southern clime, their life was artificial here, and you gave them up to death when you restored them to a state of nature. So with society, it is an artificial state, and those reforms which appear most natural and rational prove often only sluice-gates to let in anarchy and ruin.

“ But pray,” interrupted Tempest, “ recal at the same time, that you restored them not to the tepid atmosphere of the clime where they were captured, but cast them loose in the chill air—deadly and uncongenial to their nature. There have been alternate centuries, when violence or priestly craft or philosophic sophistry or specious eloquence have ruled the world. This age deifies the rights of property, deducing even individual liberty thence, and in this age, lady, when you are told, that for the multitude, impoverished, brutalised, and hardened into crime—the freedom of a state of nature, would resolve itself into starvation and anarchy, then recollect that it is always supposing that they be not at the same time—as they ought—restored to that warmth and kindness of feeling natural to man, but which selfishness and long oppression have destroyed and chilled!”

Sir Jasper bent his brows on the pre-

sumptuous theorist with an expression of withering sarcasm, but in vain, for the youth with an abrupt and ungainly salutation, took his leave, and hastened back to the old Galvanist's cottage, where the reader is already acquainted with the scene awaiting him.

## CHAPTER XX.

## THE NUPTIALS.

It was nine o'clock in the morning. The small Gothic church which stood adjacent to the castle within the precincts of Upland Park, had been during the night fitted up with all the magnificence which such brief notice would allow. It was at that hour already known that by ten o'clock of the same day the marriage of the Senator's daughter would be celebrated within its walls.

Vehicles were upset into ditches, wheels driven off, and nags' knees broken in the anxiety of the village gossips to spread

this astounding intelligence amongst their neighbours, and yet be back in time to witness the event they had announced.

Nothing, to all appearance, could be more irrevocable than this sudden marriage. Julian had quitted the castle the preceding evening. If without even the simulation of mutual attachment the bridegroom was obedient and the bride resigned. Lord Lofty and old Cash had signed a binding contract, and the Prime Minister himself stood sponsor to this hasty alliance.

The brows of the Lady Calliroë were already wreathed with white; the bell of the old church was about to toll, and that stage of the matrimonial proceedings seemed virtually to have arrived when all who knowing any impediment had neglected to make it known were evermore bound to silence.

At this eleventh hour, when the whole party were assembling in the state room of the Castle, preparatory to the fulfilment of the civil and most important part of the ceremony,

old Cash and Lord Lofty were called aside, each by a missive so urgent as to command immediate attention. Mutual excuses "for a few minutes of inevitable absence" came to their lips simultaneously, and a short time only had elapsed when Sir Jasper was summoned away; whilst the bride, who had just made her appearance through the opened doors, again retired.

The ex-chancellor, who was remarkable for the inaptness and eccentricity of his proceedings, had seized this opportunity to fasten a fierce theological dispute upon the Bishop, a mild and unargumentative prelate, whose temper and acquirements led him alike to eschew discussion, but who could not elude the fierce onslaught of this unscrupulous and subtle adversary, who was pleased hypothetically to advocate the Bhudist theory in opposition to the Christian dispensation.

Now in all this it struck the bridegroom that so little account was taken of him that he resolved to resent the neglect with which



all parties seemed to treat him. He too therefore retired, and, after rambling through the gallery, finally ensconced himself in a nook of the library, where he was likely to remain long undiscovered, being determined that his absence should at length recall them to a due sense of his importance in the approaching ceremony.

As he had anticipated, just as Lord Besom had entangled the Bishop in a maze of sophistries, and badgered him into attributing the opinions of Confucius to a father of the church, and confusing the Vedantas with the Zendavesta, the absentees reappeared, together with the bride.

But every brow was thoughtful and clouded, and it was obvious that even during that brief absence some fact must have transpired, or some occurrence taken place to modify the feeling of all these personages respecting the forthcoming event.

This change was evidenced by marked embarrassment and unusual taciturnity, interrupted

by a few monosyllables which resembled the rare drops of rain which before a storm fall from a lurid sky through the oppressive atmosphere.

At this moment the prolonged absence of Eustatius broke the spell and gave vent to the approaching tempest.

“I am not young,” said the Chancellor gallantly to the bride, glancing at his person in the glass, as much as to say, ‘though devilish well-favoured;’ “but I should never look up again if I had had the misfortune to have kept the Lady Calliroë waiting one second upon such an occasion”

The observation if not mischievous was unfortunate, for the blue veins swelled on the temples of the Senator’s daughter: her beautiful lips moved scornfully, and she burst into a flood of tears.

They were those tears, not of distress or pain, but of passion and of pride, by which a woman resents and avenges an indignity and urges man alike to espouse her right or to assert her wrong. Such Helen wept before

old Priam and his sons, and such Lucretia may have shed to Brutus.

“My child!” said the father tenderly, approaching her, and then turning to John Cash he apostrophised him a little haughtily.

“I fear all this has been too sudden. The behaviour of your son and my daughter’s agitation render it, I think, necessary that we should postpone the ceremony.”

“Or abandon it altogether and no harm done,” replied old Cash bluntly. “We are, so to say, between four walls; you and I, the minister, the lawyer, and the priest, and there is therefore no reason why plain truths should not be spoken in a plain way. This match was made up like a bargain at a fair to suit your book and mine; and the lass and lad were no more consulted in the matter than the pig bought, sold, or higgled for. But since she frets about it I will not see her made unhappy. Look here, my good girl,” added the old man, taking the Lady Calliroë kindly by the hand, “dry your blue eyes---a blessing on ’em---This

match was made up because I was rich and ready, and your father proud and poor; but though I have settled on you what buys him out and out, there is no call to take my son unless you like him. I don't know that I should if I were a woman, though, thank God, since he belongs to me, he is not the ugliest man in the united monarchies (here he looked point blank at the ex-chancellor who muttered 'And thank God I am not the greatest fool.') Nor even if you are taking on after any other spark. I can afford to do a handsome thing if need be, and therefore wish to make it plain that what I have promised is promised whether you become my daughter-in-law or not, which you never shall without your free consent."

"The law," replied Lord Lofty, almost contemptuously; renders that contract already binding, but I beg leave to waive it for myself and daughter."

"At least," interfered Sir Jasper, "you will limit to temporary use of his signature, the rights

acquired under it—an accommodation which will no doubt be gratifying to our generous and straight-forward friend.”

“I should like to hear your daughter’s answer,” replied old Cash, drily; “come my girl, speak up and tell the truth and shame the devil.”

At this moment, the return of the bridegroom, who had been hunted out in his nook in the library, added not a little to the embarrassment of the scene; but before the Lady Calliroe’s answer is recorded, it is necessary to the development of the story, to give the reader a peep behind the scenes, and explain the causes which had led to so remarkable a change in the conduct or opinions of all these personages.

The written communication received by the senator simultaneously with that which called old Cash away, was hastily scribbled in pencil—

“MY LORD,

“I have travelled hither, by my husband’s

permission, without a moment's delay, to seek you out. I implore to see you, for a few minutes—instantly—before this marriage has taken place. I come to avert ruin and disappointment.

“ In haste,

“ Your affectionate cousin,

JULIA DE FOUGERES.

“ Blue chamber in the moorish library—  
twenty-eight minutes to ten.”

Julia de Fougères was Julian's sister, and well-known to the senator as a political intrigante of the most incorrigible stamp, but this long journey—the consent of her formal husband—her knowledge of this mysterious marriage, and the denunciations contained in her letter, determined him, at least, to hear what she had to say.

Madame de Fougères had not her husband's consent, she had only become acquainted with the projected marriage beneath the senator's roof, and she did not come to save him from ruin, but only to prevent his being over-reached in a bargain, and to make her own ; but as she had journeyed direct from Paris, for that express purpose, her note contained one literal and another partial truth, a great deal more than she usually infused into so brief an epistle.

She startled the senator, however, by announcing at whose instigation — for what purpose—and armed with what secret she had come.

Julia de Fougères was actually despatched by Middleman Cautious, the moderate leader, to gain over Lord Lofty to his party! Wildly chimerical as such an enterprise might seem she declared herself mistress of a truth so incredibly important, that it would at once

reverse the relative positions of John Cash, and the senator as to fortune.

The spirit of intrigue, and a certain political prescience which whispered to Madame de Fougères, that the long reign of the Rationalists was drawing to a close, had led her insidiously to cultivate an interest with the Moderates.

When Middleman Cautious their chief was introduced to the reader, he was chuckling in the discovery of a secret which made him master of the co-operation of old Cash, and enabled him to appropriate all the influence derived by that celebrated capitalist from his enormous wealth. This discovery consisted in having traced the source of his prosperity to the possession of the sulphur mines whose produce constituted the really effective ingredient of the disinfecting medium of the contagion affecting every kind of grain—and secondly, to his having, through indefatigable



exertion, ascertained that the title to this property was invalid, and that the right to work the mines—having, together, with many other obsolete rights, been duly purchased by Lord Lofty's father, and never subsequently sold by him--was according to the local law, which allowed of no prescription, really vested in his son. To this fact, held *in terrorem* over old Cash, he had abjectedly surrendered in all the pride of his independent indifference. He promised his influence and co-operation to the Moderates, but instantly caused the possibility of an alliance between his son and the daughter of the senator to be suggested to Sir Jasper who was led to pursue and conclude the negotiation in the delusive belief that its successful termination was due to his own persuasive powers.

Middleman Cautious had, however, caused the movements of old Cash to be narrowly watched, and though the utmost promptness

and secrecy had been used by the minister and the millocrat, it was still ascertained by him that old Cash and his son had started for the residence of the senator, and coupling this suspicious circumstance with the unaccountable absence of Sir Jasper, the Moderate leader, jumped to the conclusion that his victim intended to elude his coercion by some compromise with the senator — which, ignorant as the latter still was of his rights, he might effect on his own terms.

It was at the moment that this conviction flashed across his mind, impossible for Middleman Cautious to absent himself—to say nothing of the difficulties of obtaining sufficiently prompt access to the senator to prevent the mischief.

Under these circumstances, fully aware of the risks he ran, he determined to employ the unscrupulous, but bold and able Julia de Fougères, to attempt to detach Lord Lofty from the Rationalist interest.

To trust her with his secret was indeed to confide to one who might betray him, a weapon of offence which by any further delay would certainly be rendered useless in his hands.

On her arrival at Upland Castle, though startled at discovery of the marriage then actually proceeding— as she still derived confidence and energy from the key which she possessed to the motives of the “ high contracting parties,” she resolved even at that stage to interrupt it, and for this purpose had despatched to the senator the hasty note just given to the reader.

The difficulty of the negotiatrix was to persuade her relative of the reality of her pretensions without shewing him her cards, and disarming herself of her secret, as Middleman Cautions had done by her.

The senator, if, for the best of reasons, he had no objection to the change of party, had unshakable confidence in his chief, and he was growing pompous and incredulous when it

struck his cousin that as far as her personal advantage was concerned matters might be quite as satisfactorily solved by throwing overboard the moderate leader and making terms with Sir Jasper.

Sir Jasper was then summoned. His rapid perception soon enabled him to fathom the affair in all its bearings, he agreed to the terms of the fair traitress and became master of the astounding revelation which appeared almost magically to place the senator in the envied position of old Cash.

"It is not too late," were the first words of Lord Lofty, "my daughter shall never wed that churl's son."

"Hush," said the minister, "we must proceed with caution. We may find some pretext to delay or evade this marriage, but we dare not break it off yet, for remember that this man's adhesion to-morrow is of vital importance. Leave it to me."

The habitual deference of the senator to his

chief led him to acquiesce though as we have seen the elation of his sudden fortune prompted him afterwards to interfere inopportunately.

The missive which had been at the same time transmitted to John Cash had narrowly escaped delivery, which was only secured by the accidental presence of one of his son's attendants, who declared that at all times the old man insisted on all papers being put into his own hands, a habit far less harassing than would be supposed to a man who could not or would not read.

He glanced at it hastily, and was about depositing it in his capacious pockets when his eye caught the seal, and he hurried from the room to enquire how and when that letter had been forwarded, and to give instructions instantly to trace the messenger.

There was no need, he was loitering at the gate, and was ushered into a private apartment—it was Tempest.

"This," said old Cash, with a mixture of ferocity and trepidation, "is from—"

"It is from Him," answered Tempest, gloomily.

"Then you know where the maniac hides—you know where he is?" said the old man, eagerly.

"His body is in the grave I have dug for it—the vitality once animating it, floats free from matter through the wide range of creation, and his soul, disengaged from both, is with his God."

"Dead!" ejaculated old Cash, whose knees tottered, and whose unimpressible features seemed convulsed with agitation. "Dead!! Where and how did he die? and who and what are you?"

"His disciple and companion from the cell in which you shut—to the grave in which I have laid him."

"And did he leave nothing for me?" asked

the old man still in profound anxiety. "No message—no curse—no blessing?"

"I know not which," replied Tempest, "he wavered unhappily between his hatred of mankind and you, and his sudden death has left me the depository of his last will which I had sworn to deliver into your hands if he died without other testamentary disposition."

"Where is it?" asked old Cash, with a stout voice but a faint heart.

"I have a condition to make."

"A condition; we must become better acquainted. All the world knows I am rich. I can be liberal—you may find a friend in me."

"Friendship requires reciprocity. I was his friend—I am your enemy, but charged with that which may prove a curse or set at rest the anxieties of years. I know not which."

"Do you want gold?" asked old Cash.

"Not yours; I require a nobler price. You have bought a bride for your son, the bell is tolling now for the priest to consecrate that sacrifice. Have you her free consent, for on that condition only do I discharge my trust?"

"What is she to you?"

"Like the first or last of womankind—a sister."

"I have no wish to force her inclination."

"Then," said Tempest, "go now and put the question to her, if you will promise so, and keep your promise, within one hour I will perform mine, if not I withhold his momentous legacy."

"Do you not admit that it is mine?"

"Did you never keep back fame, wealth, and liberty that was another's?"

"He had fearful secrets," mused the old man.

"And they have died with him, unless they be contained in that bequest."



“ If I consent, where is it ? ”

“ Comply, and, for good or evil, it is yours on your return ; go, be prompt and remember that you cannot deceive me.”

Old Cash reflected for a few moments. The unceasing cause of his anxiety was removed—the suspended sword of Damocles had fallen or was unhung, and certitude was about to replace vague apprehension, but he was prepared to find the confident of the man whom he had persecuted, wild, eccentric and intractable by ordinary means, and therefore made up his mind to fulfil upon the spot the condition imposed, which was not, as will be subsequently explained, at that moment particularly onerous.

With this determination he had returned into the presence of the marriage party, where, as it has been shewn, his son's absence led to the proposition to defer the ceremony, and afforded him the opportunity of bluntly consulting the inclinations of the bride, a point of

the story from which digression was made to explain to the reader the change operated in the feelings of Lord Lofty, Sir Jasper, and old Cash by the episodes which have just been narrated.

All eyes were turned on the senator's daughter, and Lord Besom, who had thrown himself upon an ottoman, resting his chin upon his hand and his elbow upon his knee, surveyed her with all the critical attention which he usually devoted at the opera to certain passages or steps in the début of a choral star or nymph of the ballet.

The Lady Calliroë, after a moment's pause, cast her still humid eyes, with a glance of unequivocal scorn upon the bridegroom, and then turning to his father, she answered in a voice whose tone at first respectful, grew at length almost imperious.

"This marriage, planned without my knowledge, was forced upon my inexperience and timidity. Dragged from my maiden retirement

without breathing-time into the broad glare of publicity, to serve political interests—I may not now retrace my steps. To answer you and my father and Sir Jasper, you will find in me, sir, a dutiful daughter-in-law, mindful both of the honour and the interests of my adoptive family. This step has not only my full concurrence, but—as at this time I have the right—I *insist* that it shall take place.”

“My child,” said the senator, as soon as he could recover his surprise, and notwithstanding the signs made by the minister to whose admonitions he was already far less docile—“my child, it is at least well that you should know that as regards your father, the causes which rendered this alliance eligible have ceased to exist. It was in fact only an error—I had almost said a fraud—which prevented, but now no longer hinders us from the possession of that wealth which this contract was to have secured.”

Old Cash, without comment on this speech,

took out the contract from his pocket and having remarked, "You remember that we have made these stipulations binding whether the marriage takes place or not," he read aloud the third article, by which, in consideration of the mortgages cleared by old Cash in favour of the Lady Calliroë, *her father ceded to Eustatius all rights and claims whatever of which he might be possessed.*

"Good God!" said Sir Jasper, "that forgotten clause is fatal."

"It cannot be binding!" gasped the senator as he sank upon the seat, at this overwhelming disappointment, whilst the ex-chancellor exclaimed energetically,

"Safe as the law can make it, I pledge you my professional reputation!" And then he asked with eager curiosity, "But what has occurred to give it point just now?"

"You knew of this!" said the senator fiercely.

"Of course I knew it," replied the old man

quietly, and then he continued in the same tone pointing to his son, "you will hence perceive that according to this agreement that lad would be just now the owner of the goose that lays the golden eggs, but as I would not trust the young Absalom, his right has been duly conveyed over to me, and therefore, as he is not worth a crown-piece, I command him to fall down upon his marrow-bones to beg pardon, for his unmannerly absence, of his wife that is to be, for he would not readily find one richer than I am bound to make her, nor I a daughter who would please me better."

"My father," replied Flustatius, "you should not interfere in lovers' quarrels; there is nothing in the world I will not do to propitiate the Lady Calliroë; but this is no scene of a melodrame."

"It will end like one, in a speedy marriage, for if I had not a wife already I would have the girl myself."

The Lady Calliroë turned with winning

cordiality to old Cash, who kissed her on the forehead, and then extending her hand in reconciliation to her future bridegroom, with an air of humiliating patronage, she allowed him to carry it to his lips, rebuking his fatuity by the unequivocal manner in which this action expressed, that she forgave his discourtesy for the sake of his father, and by the inference to which her bearing led that she would as soon have wedded the old man as his son.

Lord Lofty and the minister, who fully understood, and were so deeply interested in this scene, quite inexplicable to the ex-chancellor and the Bishop, were still speechless with surprise, for even Sir Jasper was awed by the successful duplicity of this man, who had triumphantly worked out his own designs by the very act into which the statesman thought that he had cajoled him.

As John Cash had everything now his own way, it was agreed that the marriage should proceed, and having been joined by Madame

de Fougères, and the bridesmaids, twenty minutes after, they were on their way to the Gothic chapel.

"After all," said the minister—who had hitherto been somewhat crest-fallen—to the senator, "all is well that ends well."

"You will not forget," whispered the elated Julia, "that you promised me the secretaryship for my brother."

Sir Jasper smiled Jesuitically and blandly.

"Assuredly, but do you think he would accept it?"

"In his position how can you doubt it?"

"Because he has just left this as governor-general."

"Impossible—a jest."

"The truth, upon my honour."

"Then my pains have been for nothing!" exclaimed the lady, who, till reflection brought her consolation in the fact *per se* of her brother's prosperity, felt as much overwhelmed as that traitress of Roman history, who having

sold the secret of her countrymen to the enemy for his trinkets, was crushed beneath their weight as the price of her treachery.

As the marriage party advanced up the aisle of the chapel, a quiet smile of self-gratulation played about the features of old Cash. Scarcely yet recovered from their emotion and surprise, the other actors in this scene, with the exception of the Lady Calliroë, looked like people whom the solemnity of the occasion had sobered into seriousness.

*She* trod with a firm step and a brow serene and haughty. Were her thoughts then of the past or of its hopes, or did she indulge in illusions of self-sacrifice? No; a newly-awakened passion had grown to sudden maturity in her heart and filled it with aspirations of the future, and if her step is proud as she moves along, and if her eye sparkles as she glances round, it is with gratified ambition.



## CHAPTER XXL

## REFORM IN 1906.

PARIS which half a century before was a place of cosmopolitan rendezvous, had in 1906 become a cosmopolitan city.

Who that lounged along the broad pavements of its scrupulously clean streets—thronged with a crowd of passers by, jostling each other in all the seriousness of business-like abstraction and hurry, which can neither brook

detention nor waste words to make or to receive apology—who that looked on its shop signs recording, beside the name and occupation of its tenant, almost invariably the address of its branch establishment in Manchester or London and sometimes in Calcutta and New York—who that witnessed the tawdriness and filth replaced by comfort and the elegance to which ~~smugness~~ had succeeded—could believe that he stood in the Paris which a generation ~~past~~ was noted for the foulness of its narrow streets, its dissolutely lounging throng and deep national antipathies!

The streets of that most commercial and methodical of cities Amsterdam, where never brick was laid without Mercury's inspiration, where no man ever walks abroad either hurriedly or idle, and where even the black Friesland horses, harnessed to their trucks, pick their way soberly and busily on iron pattens—the streets even of Amsterdam thus filled, give only the idea of an exclusively

acquisitive city, but without any of that feverish eagerness for gain and entire absorption in its pursuit once only to be seen in Hull or Manchester, or east of Temple Bar, but in 1906 distinctive of the Parisian population.

That its Anglophobia had as completely vanished as its former horror of Jews, Saracens and Sorcerers, and that intercommunication had connected the former capitals of rival kingdoms as intimately as neighbouring cities of a common province, was abundantly testified by the superscriptions which told that the inmate of number thirty Rue Richelieu, carried on business at 16 Regent Street, and 124 Cornhill; that the dress-maker of Rue de la paix had a branch establishment in St. James's Street, and that the wholesale offices of the grocer of the Rue St. Honoré were in Mincing Lane.

It was further evidenced by the prevalence of the English language — which, like the French in London, had become within a shade

as common as the aboriginal tongue, reminding one of those towns which, like Brussels or Strasburg, once formed the boundary where two races mingled, and where French and Flemish, and French and German were in a like manner indiscriminately spoken.

This paradoxical change in the Parisian or rather in the French character—for Paris epitomises France—was a natural consequence of its national conformation, which the progress of civilisation had yet but slightly modified, even long after its final triumph over the rivalry and prejudice of barbarous nationalities.

There was always an imitative aptitude in the French character, which periodically made contagious some peculiar impulse, and rendered the national tendency definite, complete and—in contradistinction to Anglo-Saxon universality—exclusive. Religious intolerance and political oppression had always enemies in England. She brought forth contemporaneously, during centuries, the resolute dis-

sender, the bold metaphysical speculator the sturdy freemen, ardent soldier and eager merchant. The French people in the aggregate, assumed successively, each of these characters. The whole nation in the days of Voltaire and Rousseau, was an infidel and cynical philosopher—in the ensuing revolution a Republican theorist. [Under the consulate and the empire it was a soldier, and with the expulsion of the elder Bourbon branch it became a trader.

The substitution in the arms of France of the domestic cock for the bold bird of rapine, was already emblematic of this change, which became less surprising in the subsequent period which witnessed such an extension of the influence of property in all surrounding countries as to level before the fraternisation of its possessors, the old barriers of nationality.

A half century back the idea would have been scouted as preposterous—even with the

historic example of Scotland's buried feuds and thorough assimilation—that France and England could ever be united under one government; but nevertheless in 1906, amongst many stranger things which had come to pass, London and Paris were joint capitals of the United Monarchies, under which title, the two countries—together with the greater part of Europe—were federatively united.

The general parliament, congress, chambers, or diet, for by all these names the great federative assembly was called---met in due rotation in December 1906 in Paris, a circumstance which drew all the visiters of a London season to Paris just as all Paris was poured into London on similar occasions; for amongst other changes in the character of the inhabitants of the once gay city, the Parisian was no longer satisfied that, with the exception of a forest and the sea, Paris contained everything worth seeing, or content in his most adventurous mood to live and die in it, if he had passed a

day at Fontainebleau, or once peeped from Dieppe pier at the broad ocean;—and then too it must be borne in mind that in 1846 the passage between the two cities actually occupied four-and-twenty hours instead of four, besides the chances of an evil against which no remedy had in those rude days been provided—that painful and prostrating sickness of the sea, whose ridicule few Parisians of the Nineteenth Century would willingly have encountered, and which at that period was so formidable to the nervous susceptibility of French vanity, and to its keen sense of the ludicrous that a daguerreotype of Guizot, or of Louis Phillippe in that peculiar predicament would in three months have sufficed to expulse the one from political life, and the other from the throne for ever. History teaches us that such an hypothesis was of impossible realisation, because recording that all political caricature was forbidden by a law so stringent that it actually degenerated into a mosaic or moslem in prohi-

bition of the reproduction of fruits by pen or pencil; lest any fanciful likeness to political characters might offend those in authority. The writings of the day inform us that after a celebrated trial, the mere design of a pear was considered libellous and treasonable on account of its supposed resemblance to the physiognomy of the French King. We may therefore judge whether animal painting was tolerated by the law, and in this circumstance, perhaps, discern the origin of the taste at that day prevalent for the gorgeous arabesques transmitted to us in lithographic collection, and no doubt inspired by political restriction as those of the Moorish Alhambra were by Saracen intolerance, interpreting literally the prohibition contained in the commandment which forbids to make the graven image of anything created.

The Paris of 1906—if like London in the same year, it differed from the Paris and London of sixty years preceding—bore now suf-



ficient resemblance to its sister capital to have been taken for a portion of the same city.

It was the close of December, and in its squares and streets the hum of business had given way to the feverish agitation of popular excitement, not a little increased by the vast affluence of strangers bent only on political pursuits; and who both outnumbered and carried away by their undivided earnestness the Parisian population.

It was one of those occasions on which vast changes were foreshadowed, not by the tumultuous brawl of local discontent or partial clamour, ruffling ephemerally the surface of society---but by those indications rather deep than loud, which growing and gathering, image the portentous heaving of the ocean's bosom when stirred by a heavy ground swell.

Thousands upon thousands who had never before entertained an opinion or idea on politics, now felt strongly on the subject, and were urged by prejudice or passion.

Men, who during a great portion of their lives had been incredulous or indifferent, began to take a deep interest in passing events. Old gentlemen who for years had skipped over politics to seek the police reports, or the horticultural column, now devoutly read the leading article of their paper. The exclusive speculator turned from the price of stocks and shares to the account of the monster meetings and important demonstrations. The very *habitué* of the Parisian club, or coffee house, who for a quarter of a century had sought refuge from the discussion of public affairs in his quiet game and glass of *absinthe*, now swallowed down instead of sipping his favorite beverage, and abandoned his thumb-worn dominos to hearken with eager attention to the politician of his circle.

It was one of those occasions, in fact, on which nations seemed moved by a simultaneous and almost instinctive impulse, like that which

renders bees and swallows restless on the eve of swarming or migration.

Such moved the barbaric tribes which, wave-like, overwhelmed old Rome's declining Empire—such roused the crusading population of the middle ages, such pervaded the French nation before its terrible revolution, and such in 1832, urged the British people to struggle for that parliamentary reform, the first of the long series of changes which have influenced, in their progress, the history of the world.

It was universally felt, that the crisis was arrived which had been months, and, indeed, years preparing.

The prestige with which long uninterrupted success had invested the Rationalists, and the belief in the infallibility of this party—devoutly entertained by millions disavowing it--began to be shaken by the signs of the times. Open desertion and secret treachery thinned its

ranks and those, who all their lives had scouted the idea of *Moderate* ascendancy now gathered round the Moderate banner.

Middleman Cautious had, in the most masterly manner, marshalled and organised the hosts that thronged into his camp.

Hitherto doubtful of his strength, the assaults he had made year after year upon his adversaries, had been mere feints—he was now preparing to thrust home. The cry was fairly up, the contest was accepted as one between the middle classes and the oligarchy of great capitalists. The bulk of the labouring people had banded with the opposition. Rationalists and Moderates had long alike kept down the *common sense men*; but Middleman Cautious had recently confederated with them, skilfully profiting by the clamorous energy and want of organisation of their first disenthralment, and by the confidence with which this conciliatory conduct had inspired them—to make his final attack upon the Rationalist party. Without

the aid of the middle classes, and in the teeth of the encouragement afforded by the opposition, government found itself unable to repress the popular licence so long unknown in the United Monarchies.

As the crisis had drawn near, the Moderate leader had called forth all that was most appalling in popular excitement—like a necromancer conjuring up his confederate spirits from the depths of pandemonium—to paralyse and overawe his adversaries. The millions of the people were stirred—the thousands of the middle classes were agitated—the hundreds of the dominant body were threatened with destruction. The basis and the centre of the social pyramid, were shaken by a convulsion, which threatening the whole edifice, seemed sure to loosen and prostrate its oligarchic apex.

Investive Rabid, the popular agitator, suspending his long enmity to the Moderates, for the purpose of vanquishing one adversary at a time was, according to the terms of the

convention he had made, temporarily acting as the lieutenant of the Moderate chief. He had harangued at meetings—he had organised processions of hundreds of thousands, and he had moved the masses in the direction, most propitious to the views of Middleman Cautious.

Now all these facts disseminated by the million-tongued press were known to man, woman and child, throughout the great city, and expectation was raised to its highest pitch by the circumstance that the Moderate leader was about to introduce that night into the legislative assembly, the fatal bill which was to give a death-blow to the long triumphant oligarchy.

Middleman Cautious had that day learned the defection of old Cash, but as he moved towards the houses at the head of a procession of his followers, he found that his star was so much in the ascendancy as to give him, notwithstanding this untoward circumstance, the

assurance of a majority, and the certainty of success.

On his right hand moved the spokesman of the waverers who was introduced to the reader when making his accession conditional on the co-operation of old Cash ; and who, representing the numerous body of " waiters upon Providence" had since seen fit openly to declare his apostacy.

On his left towered the colossal figure of Invective Rabid, the Democratic chief, as he strid along with a theatrical air, insolently protective of his two companions.

The mob cheered, enthusiastically, the great man of the hour so obviously approved by their champion, and men of high standing who six months since would have thought their respectability compromised by connection with the moderates, now ostentatiously greeted him, or joined the ranks of his triumphal escort.

The municipality of the city itself which had always been actively hostile to his opinion now turned abjectly round, and made a most unconstitutional demonstration by causing the church bells to be rung and preparations to be made for an illumination. Meanwhile the Rationalist party seemed paralysed, and opposed nothing but passive inactivity to the peril threatening it. Sir Jasper had, indeed, held a meeting of his most influential friends, and it was known that he had secured the co-operation of old Cash; but this intelligence, which four-and-twenty hours earlier might have been decisive, now came too late. Hour by hour, and minute by minute, fresh defections took place to the Moderates, even of men who protested "that nothing would ever have induced them to change sides, but the obdurate blindness of leaders who would yield nothing to the fatal tempest, of which the violence might have been broken, without any dangerous concession, by a little pliancy." Such of the Rationalists



as did not creep quietly into the senate were greeted by loud hisses and Sir Jasper made his way thither so thoroughly unperceived that the report spread without that he intended to absent himself on this occasion, and decline the combat. It was not so, however. The minister was discerned by those inside the house in his usual place, calm—collected—and though pale, with a complacent smile upon his countenance.

In 1906 it was no longer customary, as it had been half a century preceding, to make extemporaneous appeals to the members of a legislative assembly or to waste upon them oratorical graces.

In the days of Pym and Hampden, of Mirabeau and Danton, Pitt and Fox, argument and rhetoric may still have been powerful in persuading, but in the middle of the nineteenth century the veriest parliamentary tyro was aware that to have hoped ever to see an M.P. turned aside from his intended vote even

by the eloquence of a Demosthenes, would have been as vain as to have expected the conversion of the Pope to the Wesleyan form of worship by a twopenny tract, or of the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Romish faith by the recitation of a litany.

The speeches made in an age already utilitarian were therefore addressed not to auditors whom they were never hoped to influence but to the country at large, through the intermedium of the daily press, which in the fulfilment of its mission not only polished and gave pith to the effusions of the speakers, but commonly (for the credit of its peculiar paper) supplied with them style and grammar, and often with ideas.

This idle form which in the nineteenth century outlived the essence of an obsolete custom—like the cast iron extinguishers still attached to area rails, long after the introduction of gas had consigned the race of

link-boys to oblivion—had, in 1906, been long since banished.

Members then read their written speeches, of which copies, in different languages, were handed to the speaker, and electrically transmitted to the public by an office devoted to that purpose.

The tone of their delivery was that of a school-boy reciting his lesson, or of a broker calling over an inventory, and the sole object of reading it at all was to enter a formal declaration that these were the sentiments of the speaker. This ceremony, which, like kissing the book, or placing the finger on parchment, with the words "this is my act and deed," possessed a certain importance, was usually gone through with little more unction or solemnity.

It was hence understood that any answer which a member might wish to make to the speech of another must be conveyed on the

following day. Though no legal prohibition established the inviolability of this rule its infringement, except on some most extraordinary occasion, would never for a moment have been tolerated, and indeed so many years had elapsed since it had been attempted that it was not believed that the custom could ever be renewed.

It followed from these facts that in 1906 every one anxious to hear and understand the debates resorted to an expedient already adopted in 1846 by the *cognoscenti*—that of gathering them in their embellished form beyond the senate walls, instead of listening to the speeches as delivered in all the bald reality of their dishabille.

Indeed the parliamentary veterans themselves, like soldiers in the ranks, who through the smoke know little of the progress of the battle, were in the habit of abandoning their places when solicitous to learn the effect of a parliamentary contest.

Let us therefore briefly recapitulate the events of that struggle as the words of the speakers were transmitted to, and impressed upon, the masses without, by means of a vast dial plate on which every sentence of the orator appeared as soon as spoke in gigantic letters, from which, along a thousand branch lines, it was carried by the electric telegraph to every part of the United Monarchies, and diverted at will, like the gas from a main pipe, into clubs, towns, halls, and places of entertainment.

The long threatened bill brought in by Middleman Cautious was to repeal the fundamental article of the constitution of the United Monarchies, *which limited associations or companies to five and twenty members or shareholders*. The effect of his enactment had been—as every one knew, to throw into the hands of the senatorial body, the commerce, means of communication, public works, and all other sources of wealth of the whole Federative Kingdom.

It was obvious in an age which recognised the full value of association of capital that when the number of members was thus limited all enterprises requiring a large outlay must remain in the hands of the great capitalists.

Five and twenty millionaires, by clubbing each their million, were in consequence enabled to obtain exclusive possession of canals, railway lines, banking establishments, and branches of commerce, without any possible competition either on the part of individuals or of the aggregate wealth of the people; because a hundred millions, scattered amongst some thousand holders, could never be brought to bear against five and twenty in the hands of as many of their body.

Middleman Cautious fully exposed and explained the unjust and pernicious operation of the existing law in a long and able speech which derived its appositeness and force, like many other celebrated political speeches, not from the fact of its containing any novelty

but, on the contrary, from the circumstance that it set forth exactly what the vast majority knew and believed before upon the subject.

To this restrictive law he attributed all the evils afflicting the community, the commercial, manufacturing, and agricultural distress;—the misery of the people—the decline of prosperity amongst the middle classes, and finally—by a providential retribution,—the shaken credit of the great capitalists themselves, for whose sole advantage this state of things had been established.

“This fatal enactment (he said) had in the age in which they lived renewed the old Venetian oligarchy. Vast kingdoms and mighty states, which considerations of economy and common sense had united, had in this manner become the estate of a body consisting of a few hundred capitalists; whilst the middle class had sunk into the condition of its overseers and drudges, and the people had degenerated into its mere serfs. This state of things—so unnatural as to have led

even those whom it was intended to favour to the verge of bankruptcy—the nation would no longer tolerate, and the support he had received, led him to believe that in proposing a measure which would give bread to the people, restore to their former importance the middle classes of society, and shield the oligarchs from the consequences of their usurpation—by calling, in short, for the abrogation of so iniquitous a law—he was speaking the sentiments of an immense and resolute majority. In fine, he proposed *that an act be passed to allow of the association of unlimited numbers, providing only that the individuals associating be eligible to the lower house.*”

This proposition was in the highest degree satisfactory to the middle class, since none but those who could prove the possession of ten thousand pounds were qualified to sit in the Commons, and because when allowed to combine its resources this vast body would easily annihilate all the monopolies of the



millocrats; it was equally gratifying to the lower orders in this respect, that it was obviously a death blow to the domination of their oligarchic tyrants.

Middleman Cautious was followed by Invective Rabid.

The speech of the popular orator was a long diatribe against the millocrats. Every other sentence was an accusation alternated by an epigram. All the crimes of every species of tyranny which history ever had recorded, he affixed either metaphorically or directly upon the senatorial body. He painted in formidable colors the dark array of popular force, its maddening sense of wrong and energetic resolution. He threatened all classes with a convulsion, which should subvert all present social order, and realise the wildest dreams of communism and equality, as the implied alternative of resistance to the present measure.

The speech of the great democrat was only second in importance to that of Middleman

Cautious, from the assurance which it gave of the thorough sympathy with the proposed measure of that power,—the people—which after so long a torpor in the United Monarchies was awakening to such threatening life. That it had carried dismay into the Rationalist ranks appeared obvious when a senator rose to answer the last speaker, in an extemporaneous speech, in violation of all parliamentary precedent ; and the general surprise was not a little increased when its object appeared to be a mere personal attack upon Invective Rabid, without other discernible aim or object.

Lord Lofty, the most dignified of his class, who had never before been provoked into the slightest indecorum or the remotest personality, was most incredibly the person who charged the popular leader “ with gross inconsistency of action, and opinion—with glaring treachery towards the popular cause—with certain apostacy and probable venality, “ *since he, contending*

*that the people were entitled to so much, was contented with so trifling a concession ! ”*

There was but one opinion on the impolicy of this malignant and ill-judged outbreak. It was looked upon as the vindictive ebullition into which a despairing party had been betrayed by the hopelessness of its condition, and as the surest proof that it had utterly lost head in its extremity.

What could be more dangerous than for one used only to the routine of parliamentary forms to venture upon extemporaneous controversy with such an antagonist, accustomed to address popular assemblies, what more rash than to call down, in such a contest, upon his head the fervid eloquence of the great agitator.

Thus challenged, Invective Rabid made reply. The provocation given by his adversary, —the indecent violation of parliamentary proprieties, and the presumptuous rashness of the attack made by that personage,—all led his hearers to anticipate his expected castigation

with the same feeling that the bystander may experience when a lion is roused to resent the bite of an ill-favoured cur. Lashing himself into fury as he proceeded, the great demagogue turned upon his assailant all the bitterness of his sarcasm—all the vivacity of his biting wit. His unscrupulous tongue legitimately loosened, he shewed his accuser in a light alternately ridiculous, contemptible, and loathsome. Like a wolf in the fold, not contented with the demolition of his victim, he left the mark of his fatal fang upon his party, and then—when he had ruthlessly torn and mangled to the full satiation of his impetuous and ferocious temper—he rebutted one by one the calumnies of his accuser, and proceeded in a flow of impassioned eloquence to vindicate his stewardship of the people's interest, concluding by the declaration—“*that he accepted this concession as an instalment of the great debt of popular rights withheld.*”

There was no man unmoved in that unusually impassible assembly as Invective Rabid spoke, and all eyes were turned on his accuser as he winced beneath the terrible recrimination he had drawn down.

But when the triumphant demagogue had ceased and turned to gather the applause—which scarce suppressed had seemed ready to burst forth, as he was proceeding—he saw a cloud on the brow of Middleman Cautious. He had been too successful; he had crushed his adversary, but he had *proved too much* and been betrayed into an avowal alarming to the conservative susceptibilities of his moderate allies.

At this juncture Sir Jasper rose; a bland smile which had played upon his features vanished, but not to give place to any sign of disquietude or vexation. On the contrary his manner was all suavity and equanimity. He first stopped to address a few words to John Cash, who had taken his seat beside him, but

this was judged to be only a pantomimic demonstration of the good understanding between the minister and his new adherent, and drew forth from Invective Rabid a slight cheer of ironical defiance.

In reality Sir Jasper was repeating to old Cash the preconcerted signal for the delivery or the postponement of the brief speech prepared for his influential follower. This done, he turned to his auditors and opened his discourse.

No one doubted that it would be eloquent and able; but few believed that in the present state of public feeling it could possibly prove effective, and his auditors were prepared to see him at best succumb with dignity, and—so to say—gather his senatorial robes around him to die decently like Cæsar at the foot of Pompey's statue.

Sir Jasper began—not by attacking, but by lauding his chief adversary. He adduced and praised the arguments of Middleman Cautious

upon the present question, and attributed to the moderate leader's able exposition of his views, the present modification of his own. "For he frankly owned, that his opinions *were* changed, and he stood there boldly to avow that this change had originated in the convictions of a political opponent."

He then gave his auditors a succinct account of his former impressions (a concentration of the prejudices of his party) of his first suspicion that they were erroneous, and of the course of ratiocination which led him to conviction of their fallacy.

But whilst he paid a just tribute to the early discernment of a great political truth by his adversary, he contended "that the conclusions drawn by him from this truth—once established—were lame and impotent, and he exposed the chain of reasoning which had led him not to the same point as Middleman Cautious, but **A STEP BEYOND INTO THE CAREER OF REFORM.**"

“ He was convinced that to retain inviolate the great principle which acknowledged the rights of property as the first and paramount duty of society to *avoid those radical changes to which Invective Rabid had avowed that the present measure was only a stepping-stone*, and to render concession *final*, that a further stride must be taken into it, one which would give more ample security to one portion of the people, and greater satisfaction to the other.

“ He had, therefore, with the consent of the most influential of his party come down to the House to give the measure his full support with this amendment, “*that the right of association be not only unlimited as to numbers,* BUT THROWN OPEN WITHOUT QUALIFICATION TO ALL THE SUBJECTS OF THE UNITED MONARCHIES.”

At this announcement, a cheer burst forth simultaneously from the ministerial and opposition benches, and from the followers of Invective Rabid.



It was caught up without—it spread through the streets of Paris, and the astounding intelligence borne by the electric fluid, was conveyed far and wide, convulsing the inhabitants of the whole empire as it had convulsed the astonished capital.

7 Middleman Cautious felt as if a shot had passed through his heart and paralyzed its action, so profound was his vexation.

He knew that he was vanquished in the very hour of success; and though too game to relinquish the contest, his head, drooped amidst the general enthusiasm, for a moment on his breast in utter hopelessness.

There was only one individual either within or without those walls, who did not, at this moment, envy or admire Sir Jasper as the most successful, able, and profound of living men—it was old Cash, still smiling at the political tutelage assumed over him by the minister, and feeling as the future protector of England may have felt in its wordy parliament when he

began to know the weight of his own sword. John Cash—though he had never heard of Cavaliers or Roundheads—knew, as he glanced around him, that the time was inevitably approaching, when he too, might order the speaker's mace to be removed as a useless bauble—for the monetary Cromwell of the age had already satisfied himself from Tempest, that the Galvanist had left him sole possessor of the power which must, eventually, make the wide world his property.

THE END OF VOLUME THE FIRST.

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